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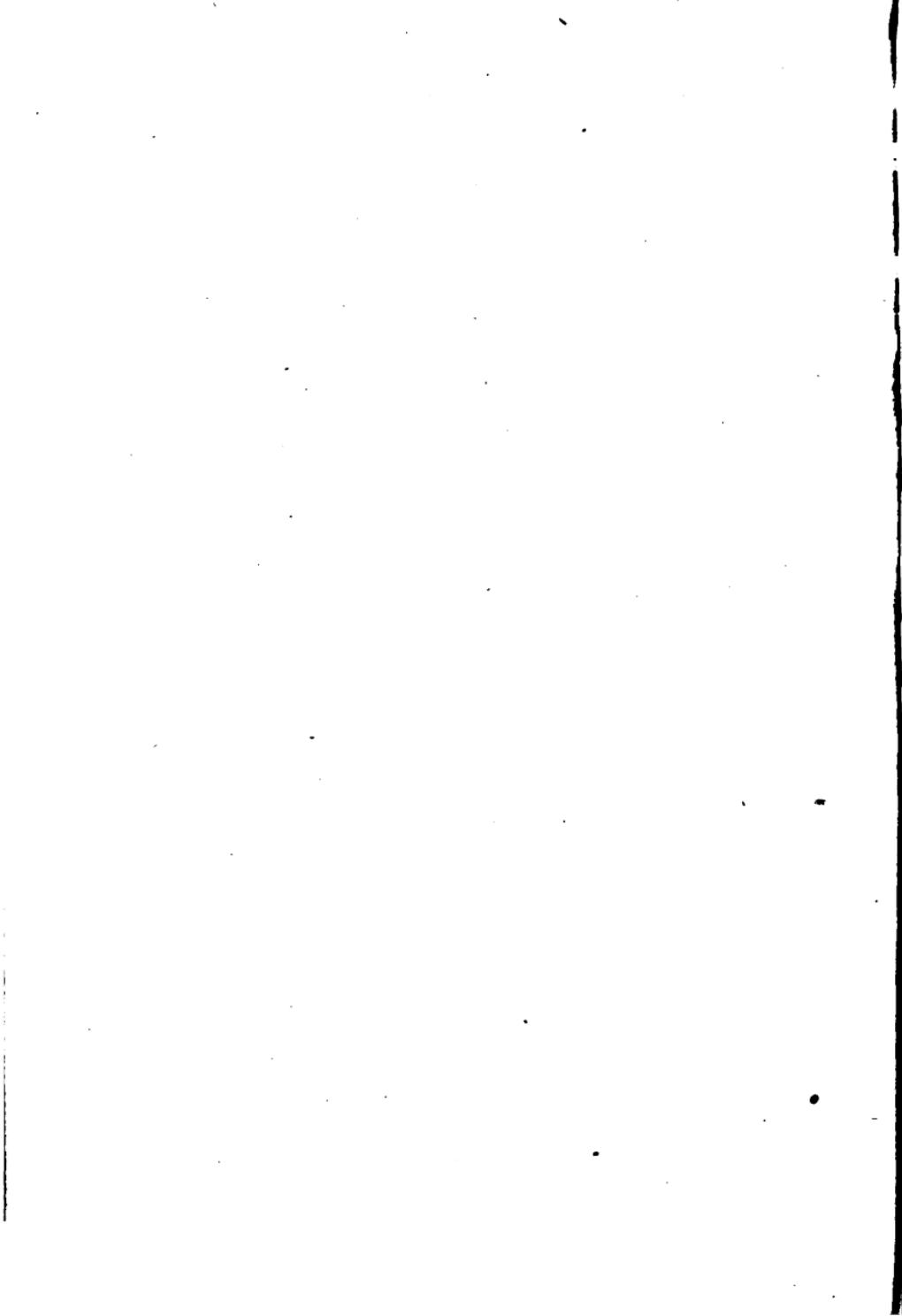
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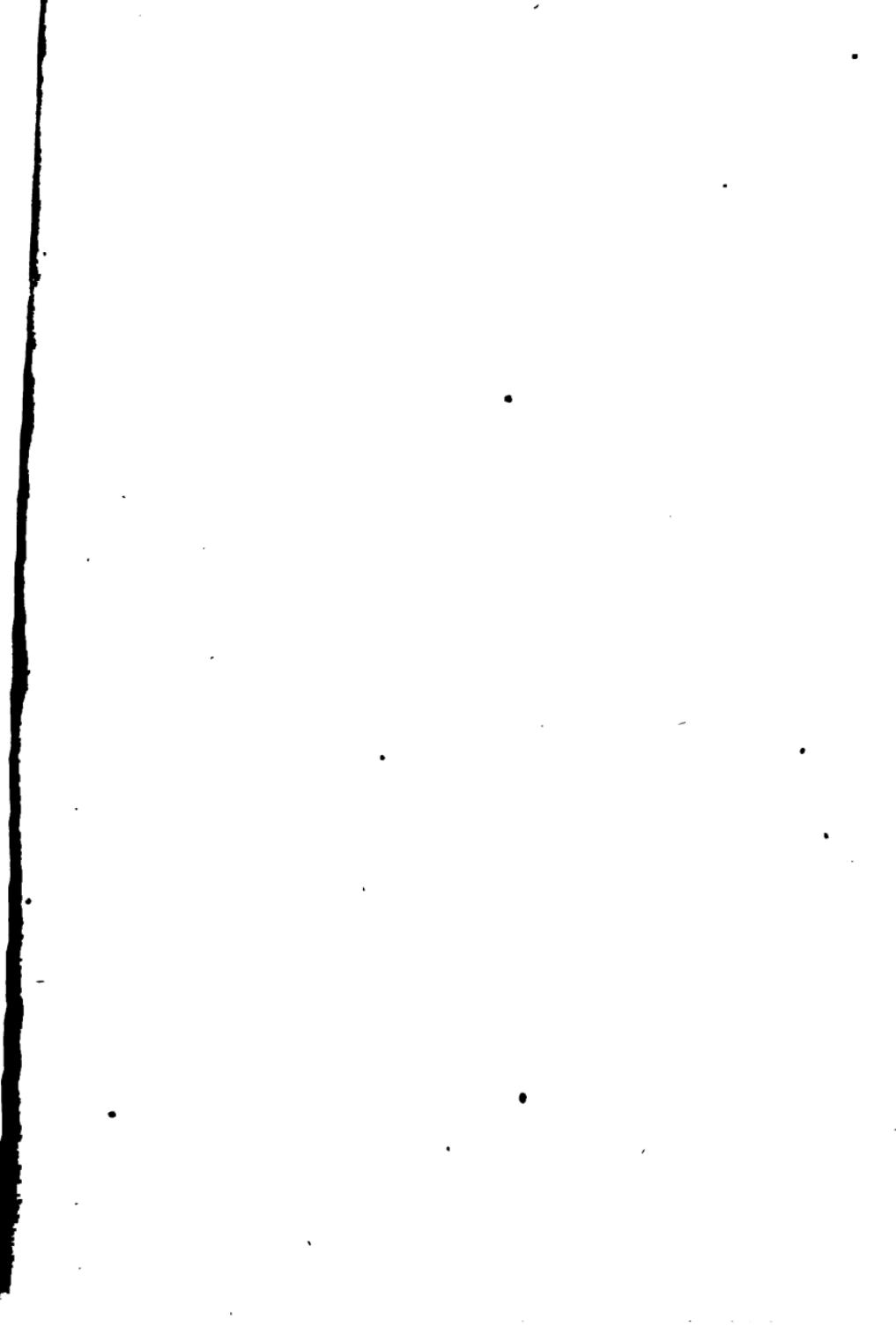
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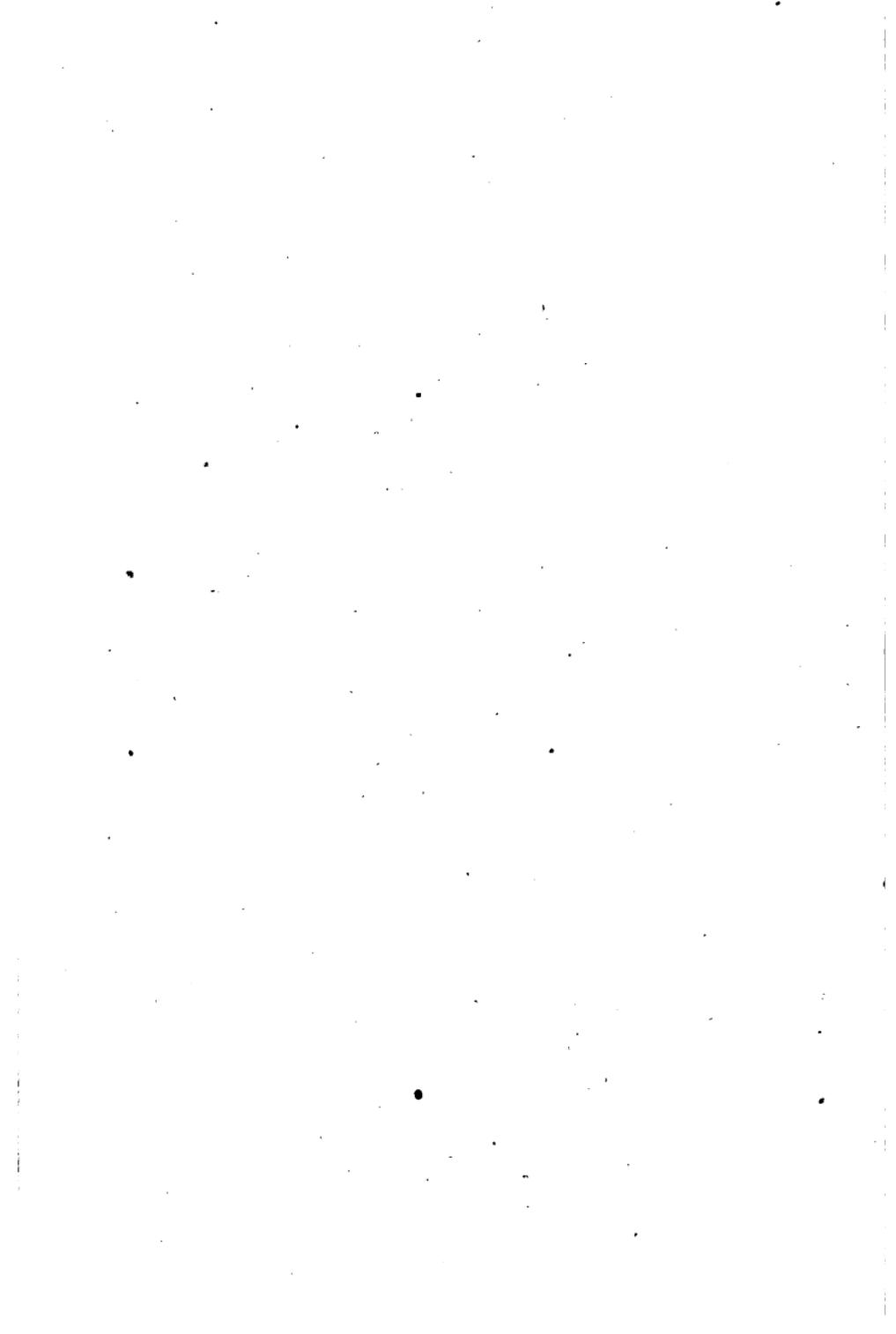
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# THE CITY OF GOD.

BY

REV. EDWIN H. NEVIN.

—

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY BY

REV. ALFRED COOKMAN.

"Ecclesiam veram intelligere non audeo, nisi in sanctis et justis.  
Multi sunt in sacramentorum communione cum Ecclesia et tamen  
jam non sunt in Ecclesia."—ST. AUSTIN.

LANCASTER, PA.:  
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O how unlike the complex works of man,  
Heaven's easy, artless, unencumbered plan!  
No meretricious graces to beguile,  
No clustering ornaments to clog the pile:  
From ostentation as from weakness free  
It stands like the cerulean arch we see,  
Majestic in its own simplicity.  
Inscribed above the portal, from afar  
Conspicuous as the brightness of a star,  
Legible only by the light they give,  
Stand the soul-quicken words, *Believe and Live!*



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## INTRODUCTION.

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If the first half of the nineteenth century was characterized by wide separation and bitter controversy among the different evangelical denominations, the last half is equally signalized by the spirit of union and Christian love. Inquiring now for points of agreement rather than of difference, the churches are rejoicing in the discovery that the points on which they agree are *numerous*, while those on which they differ are comparatively few: the points on which they agree are *fundamental and vital*, while those on which they differ are secondary and unessential; the points on which they agree are in the *Bible*, while those on which they differ are rather in *Confessions, Catechisms, Prayer-Books and Disciplines*; the points on which they agree are *blessed facts, experimental verities*, while those on which they disagree are frequently mere theories or human fancies.

Coming closer together, Christian believers are realizing to their great joy that beneath these multiplying points of agreement, there is a *common life* that flows from the same Divine source, and pervades "the whole family in heaven and in earth." This life takes on different forms, but beneath these visible and varied manifestations, Christians find that they are one in Christ, born of the same spirit,

adopted into the same family, heirs of the same blessed grace, and confidently hoping, in the ages to come, to be associated in the same heavenly home.

This, as we understand, is the conception of the true Church, or "City of our God," as developed in this volume; not a corporation organized for mutual defense and protection; not a party banded together by common opinions, and laboring for the accomplishment of similar results; not a lodge or order, or benevolent association, obligated by oaths and contemplating philanthropic ends. The true idea of the Church, as our Author shows, goes beyond all this, and taking in the fact or experience of life through Christ; suggests affinities that are not artificial, but of supernatural origin or birth. It is not that believers all belong to the same sect, but rather that they all are members of the same great spiritual Church of Jesus Christ. Sect is a merely human contrivance, doubtless with signal advantages; but the Church is a Divine arrangement, intended to bring into one those, who, scattered abroad, differ in name, in language, in color, in country, in calling, in costume, in culture, in customs, and in natural characteristics. In the world's wilderness, Christians may be widely separated; but as they come to Calvary, the distance between them gradually diminishes, until, as they ascend that sacred hill, and associate themselves around the same consecrated Cross, they realize that they are a rejoicing brotherhood, and join in the sentiment—

" Let names and sects and parties fall,  
And Jesus Christ be all in all."

This suggests what must impress every careful observer, that, as men get away from Christ, their paths diverge—they come to differ widely in their views and feelings; while, on the other hand, as they approach this Great Centre of Christian love and truth and power, they lose that selfishness which keeps men apart, drink into the spirit of Jesus, and realize gracious help to love their neighbor as themselves.

Our Author, in this interesting and valuable volume, calls special attention to the fact, that the true Church is founded on Christ, sustained by Christ, aye, is absolutely nothing without Christ—a simple truth, but oh! how often forgotten!

Mohammed, and the followers of the false Prophet, thinking to enlarge the area and extend the triumphs of the Church, have taken up the bloody sword; but the voice of history joins with the authority of Inspiration, to say, “Put up thy sword, for he that taketh the sword shall perish by the sword.”

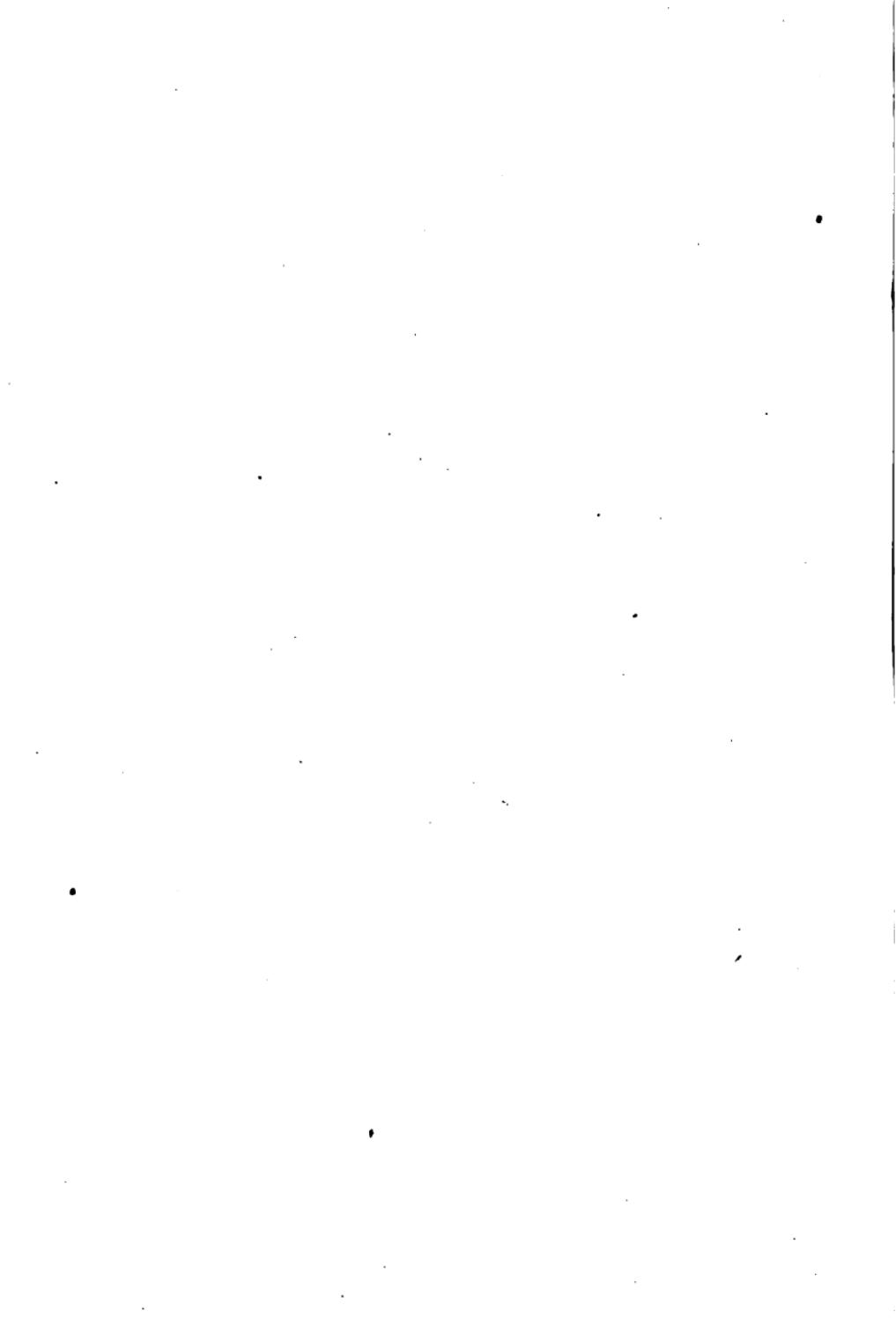
The Church of Rome, and some following in her wake, have thought to unify and enlarge the Church by means of Ecclesiastical claims and Ritualistic paraphernalia; but the efforts to engraft Pagan rites on Christian truth, have in every age proven a dismal failure. “The kingdom of God cometh not with observation; neither shall men say, Lo here! or Lo there! for behold the kingdom of God is within you.” Others, hoping to conserve the purity and promote the prosperity of the Church, have laid special stress on Ecclesiastical exclusiveness, high intellectuality, thorough

culture, peculiar costumes, cherished forms, and boasted creeds. All these are but the human and the earthly. The Church depends for its power, progress and prosperity, upon something infinitely higher and better. Jesus Christ himself is the Alpha and the Omega—the First and the Last—the all and the in all of His militant Church.

When He comes into a human heart to constitute that heart a part of His Church, He incorporates with that experience the two fundamental principles of His true Church in the world; viz: first, the spirit of self sacrifice—secondly, the spirit of universal love—principles that are in direct and everlasting antagonism to exclusiveness and selfishness in all their forms and in all their manifestations; principles that if preserved in their purity and developed in their extent and power, will bring back the time when heaven shall be seen on earth, and earth itself shall seem like heaven. Oh yes! the Church is founded in love, (Christ is love,) built up in love, filled with love, mighty through love, all glorious with love. When Constantine was advancing at the head of his armies to encounter his rival Maxentius in conflict, he saw in the heavens a luminous cross emblazoned with these words: “By this sign thou shalt conquer.” So as the Sacramental Host of God’s true Church are marshalling on the world’s battle-field for universal conquest, let them fling out their banner, and let the world see inscribed on it the figure of a cross—beautiful emblem of love, for, as has been tenderly said, “the arms of love were never stretched so wide as when extended on the cross of the world’s Redeemer.” Oh, let Christians of

whatever name, as they read these pages, be concerned respecting this Christ-life in the soul—a life that is not a mere theory or a favorite fancy, but a Gospel verity, aye a blessed spiritual reality—a life that in its development and exercise unlocks and satisfactorily explains that most precious doctrine, “the communion of saints,” a doctrine that must be experienced to be understood.

While this interesting volume will help believers to clearer views respecting the Church or “City of our God,” and foster in them the “*best life*” of which we have any knowledge—the life that comes from Christ and is to endure forever—may it also furnish a precious word of admonition to those who, in a state of spiritual orphanage, are without the home and blessed provisions that the Church offers. A minister of another denomination than the beloved Author, nevertheless with him a fellow citizen in Zion, we cordially join to direct attention to “the City set on a hill,” and affectionately say to all whom this volume shall reach, “Come ye and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.”



## THE CITY OF GOD.

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### I.

#### THE CHURCH.

WE are sometimes surprised and even staggered when we consider the little progress which the Gospel has made, and is making, in the world. In fact, however, there is no cause for surprise. For if we examine the history of the Church, so miscalled, what is it? The annals of our race contain no pages so dark, so stained with cruelty and blood. Even at this day, what is the character of too many of those ecclesiastical bodies which arrogate the title of the True Church? Is it not an external organization substituted for Christ? And the very vices which are assailed most directly by the gospel, pride, the love of pre-eminence, the lust of power—the very passions against which the entire spirit of the gospel wages an internecine war—are not these vices and passions, and in their most arrogant forms, sanctified in those churches?

When we reflect upon these mournful facts, can we wonder that the religion of Jesus has not won more rapid and illustrious victories? Beautifully simple and yet irresistibly potent were the first Churches. Those Churches were not bodies artificially framed to exalt a class of men into a spiritual aristocracy, and to collect and wield a worldly power for their own aggrandizement. Indeed it can hardly be said that they were framed at all. They grew, naturally and necessarily, out of the deepest wants of our nature. They were the free, spontaneous, instinctive associations of those whose hearts had been changed by the Holy Spirit, and whose bosoms glowed with the love of Christ. It was impossible to keep such kindred spirits apart. Their souls were melted and at once fused together in a brotherhood of faith and love and loyalty to Him who had loved them unto death. As communication takes place between objects possessed of electrical affinity—as drops of water, touching, run into each other and become one,—as particles of steel, under magnetic influence, separate themselves from the dross and dust in which they lie, and cluster around a common centre—so do Christians, in virtue of their common nature, all loving and all possessing the character which each deems most lovely, and to which he is most powerfully

drawn—separate themselves from others who have no sympathy with them in their new and higher life, that they may associate with, and cleave to, their own spiritual kindred. Finding in their mutual character that which answers to their mutual desires, it is as natural for them to associate, as it is for rivers to flow down their different channels until they are united in the sea; or for numerous and independent particles of matter to gravitate towards a common centre until, bound together by the universal law, they form but one *body*. Hence from their natural tendency, not from any intention or contrivance, but from the necessary development of the religious *life*, arises the "*Ecclesia*,"—the collection or congregation of faithful men which we designate the *True Church*.

Writers have enumerated various senses in which the word "*Ecclesia*" is to be understood; as, for example, it sometimes denotes a company of Christians small enough to meet for social worship in a single house; sometimes a larger society, comprehended within the limits of a City, as the Church of Corinth or of Rome; and occasionally the whole body of professing Christians in the world,—the visible Church Catholic. There is one meaning more which the word "*Ecclesia*," translated *Church*, bears, the one

which we have already given and which is the *highest* and most *important* of all. It has nothing to do, however, with the merely professing or nominal Christian. It takes now a purely spiritual, though a wide sense. It includes all the people of God, not of all nations only, but of all ages,—all real believers in the Lord Jesus that have been or are, or shall be hereafter—the whole number of the redeemed from among men, whether on earth or in heaven. This, indeed, is eminently the “Church of the living God.” This is what God generally means when He speaks in the Scriptures of His Church. It is this which He is said to have loved and to have given Himself for. It is this that He styles His “glorious Church;” that He calls by so many endearing names and loves to view in so many characters; that He speaks of as His bride, His body, His fullness, in fact under almost every figure which can express connection and delight.

Such then is the simple notion of the Church in its highest and best sense, as it is presented to us in the New Testament. It is a term used to denote a class of persons possessing a peculiar moral character, right affections towards God and their fellow-men. Whoever possesses these moral affections belongs to this class or is a member of this Church, no matter by what other peculiari-

ties he may be distinguished. Whoever is desti-  
tute of these moral attributes is not a member of  
this Church, or does not belong to this class, no  
matter by what name he may be called or what  
profession he may have assumed.

## II.

## THE INCARNATE HEAD.

WITH constant frequency and unerring aptness the Apostle Paul illustrates the constitution of the Christian Church by that of the human body. He finds in *it* such a display of divine arrangement, such a manifest emanation from the same all-wise mind, and such a manifold analogy of design, that his comparisons of it with the Church of the Lord Jesus are not only most close and frequent, but he takes it as his chief illustration and calls the “*ecclesia*” the “body of Christ.

Supreme in position and power over the whole body of man is placed the *head*. The seat of intelligence, will and authority, there descends from *it* the nervous chord, which, ramifying through the entire person, carries every command to every part of every member, and returns every intimation with electric speed and accuracy. Not a moment elapses between the forth-putting of the volition and its reception and execution by the extremest member, nor an instant between the sensation felt in any part and the transmission of

the intelligence to the understanding. Disobedience to the authoritative commands of the head is unknown. Only by incapacity through disease, or the loss of vital power, does any member fail instantly to carry into effect whatever is willed. Now what the head is to the body, Christ is to the "*ecclesia*." "He is the head of the body—the Church." He is head, "that in all things He might have the pre-eminence, for it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell." By virtue of this divine, indwelling fullness, he is made pre-eminent over all, so that, as head, his wisdom, will and authority may govern the body in all things.

As the head of the body—the Church—Christ must be recognized in His proper character as Emmanuel—God with us—God incarnate—the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person, who thought it not robbery to be equal with God. The precious doctrine of the Incarnate God invests with light and radiance every essential difficulty and truth of the inspired word. Infinitely mysterious itself, it yet explains every other mystery. It solves what is inexplicable, fathoms what is profound, illuminates what is obscure, and reconciles what is discrepant. And yet, while it thus irradiates every other doctrine and elucidates every other mys-

tery, it remains as it ever will, enshrined in its own unapproachable light, the most wonderful, incomprehensible, and sublime of all. Like the tall pyramid whose base is wreathed with thunder clouds, while its summit is bathed in serene sun-light, the manhood and Godhead of Jesus appeared before men and angels, despised on earth—adored in heaven. All humiliation below—all glory above.

In this Incarnate God, this divine Redeemer, there is an infinite fullness. "All the fullness of the Godhead bodily dwelleth in him." Whatever light, and life, and salvation, therefore, are poured into the world must come from Him. Did all the light in the universe dwell in the Sun, no man, it is evident, could obtain light except from the Sun. Were all the water which exists in the world collected into one reservoir, no man, it is obvious, could obtain water without applying to that reservoir. Equally evident is it that since all the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Christ, no man can obtain a portion of that fullness without applying to Christ. This truth will appear exceedingly important to all who realize the fact that unless we can obtain a portion of the fullness of God, we must pine in eternal want. The mercy which pardons sin, the divine light which illuminates the understanding, the grace

which purifies the heart, the strength which resists temptation, overcomes the world, and endures to the end; the consolation which supports the soul under trials and afflictions; the triumphant faith, and the hope full of immortality, which are requisite to give victory over death, and all the everlasting joys and glories of heaven, flow from the fullness of God, and no man can partake of them without partaking of that fullness.

How, it is sometimes asked, can we believe or imagine that any such history as that of Jesus Christ is a fact, or that the infinite God has transacted any such wonder for *man*? a being so far below His rational concern, or the range of his practical sympathy. God manifest in the flesh! God in Christ reconciling the world unto himself! the birth in the manger! the life of miracle! the incarnate dying! and the world darkening in funereal grief around the mighty sufferer's cross! It is extravagant, out of proportion; who can believe it? Any one, we readily answer, who has not lost all right conception of the magnitude of man. No work of God holds a juster proportion than this great mystery of godliness, and if we did but fully understand and appreciate the great mystery of *ungodliness*, we should think so. No man will ever have any difficulty in believing in the work of the great Incarnate, who has not lost

proper measure of humanity. But for this no the man will ever think it reason to deny His divinity, explain away His humanity, or reject the mystery of His cross. To restore this tragic fall required a tragic salvation. Nor did any sinner who had ever come to himself, felt the bondage of his sin, trembled in the sense of his terrible disorders, groaned over the deep gulfs of want opened by his sin, struggled with himself to compose the bitter struggles of his nature, heaved in throes of anguish to emancipate himself—no such person, however deep in philosophy, or skepticism, ever thought, for one moment, that Christ, with all the fullness of God, was too great a Saviour. To a mind in that state, none but a truly divine Saviour, an almighty Saviour, coming out from God's eternity, would be regarded as sufficient for the terrible emergency. Him he could believe in, just because He was great—equal to the measures of His want, able to burst the iron bondage under which he groaned. Pardon—life—salvation, broad and deep and high, for an immortal, ever expanding soul, demand divine interposition.

## III.

## LIFE FROM CHRIST.

To exist in the steady and affectionate perception of God; to devote its powers and affections to God—this is the law of the soul—this is the mode in which it was made and fitted to employ its powers—this is its life—this is its true happiness. It must have God or it dies. It must perceive God as he is and put forth its chief affections toward him, or it is a fountain of sorrow to itself—a sea of tossing and tempest—a chaos of terrific elements—a sapless branch broken from the vine of its nativity—a wandering star darting from its orbit and speeding on to the blackness of darkness.

God, then, is the soul's life; God loved, God adored, God as the focal point of all its outgoings, God as the centre, the end of all its affections. For God the soul was made. For the enjoyment of God, all its powers were framed and fitted. With its eye open to the affectionate perception of God; with all its affections harmonized, balanced, sanctified by God's will—it is full of life.

But while all this is true, it should be remembered that God only becomes known to the soul through the Incarnate Son. "No man knoweth the Father, but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." In the person of Christ is the true God—in him is eternal life. "He that hath the Son hath life."

In order that we may partake of the life of the Son, which is essential to the life of the soul, as already described, there must be a vital union established between the soul and the Son. When we are thus joined to the Lord we will be of one spirit with Him. The nature of this union, on which so much depends, is confessedly mysterious. Paul having said, we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones, immediately adds, this is a great mystery. It is in vain, therefore, to attempt to bring this subject down to the level of our comprehension. The mode in which God is present and operates throughout the universe, is to us an impenetrable secret. We cannot even understand how our own souls are present and operate in the bodies which they occupy. We need not, then, expect to comprehend the mode in which Christ dwells by His spirit in the hearts of His people. The fact that such union exists is clearly revealed; its effects are clearly stated, and its nature is set forth, as far as

it can be made known, by the most striking illustrations. In his intercessory prayer, our Saviour said, I pray—that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art *in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us. I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.* There is no union so high, so holy, so intimate as this. Human language necessarily comes short in setting it forth. We may conjoin with it the terms moral, mystical, and the like, but it is a theme fitted rather for adoring contemplation than for formal discussion. It would not do to use the word *identity* in describing this union. Thus our personality would be gone. It certainly becomes us to be careful lest, in our anxiety to exalt this union, we fall into something not unlike the Hindoo doctrine of absorption, or into a species of evangelical pantheism. But while we would avoid all exaggeration, we would be far from explaining away the language of Scripture and depriving it of all meaning and reality. It is the Saviour Himself who speaks in the wonderful passage we have just given, and we should hear Him with mingled faith and awe. We would not doubt that there is something real—far more real than our minds can yet conceive or express.

The secret of *holy living* lies in this doctrine of the union of the believer with Christ. This is

not only the ground of his hope of pardon but the source of the strength whereby he dies unto sin and lives unto righteousness. It is by being rooted and grounded in Christ that he is strengthened with might by His spirit in the inner man, and is enabled to comprehend the breadth, and length, and depth, and height of the mystery of redemption, and to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge. It is this doctrine which sustains him under all his trials, and enables him to triumph over all his enemies, for it is not he that lives, but Christ that lives in him, giving him grace sufficient for his day, and purifying him unto Himself as one of His peculiar people.

## IV.

## COMMUNION WITH THE SPIRIT.

IN the light of what has been said on the subject on *union with Christ* we may understand the real significance of Christian regeneration. It is not that the subject of it is set in a new relation to certain abstract laws, tests, obligations, but it is that he is brought back, by virtue of that union into his true normal relation to the eternal spirit of God, which dwelt with unlimited fullness in Christ, and begins to live as he was made to live, an inspired life, led of the spirit, dwelt in, walked in by the spirit, made to be a temple for the inhabitation of God, as he was originally designed to be. Sanctification, properly regarded, is, accordingly, nothing but a completed inspiration; a bringing of every thought into captivity to the divine movement. And then if we look at the attributes of character perfected, how superlative, how evidently divine they are; the self-renunciation, the patience, the fortitude in suffering, the courage superior to death and all torments of persecution, the repose, the joy, the

abounding beneficence, the forgiveness of enemies, the fidelity to God, that dies sooner than renounce him, these are the results and characteristics by which the inspired life is distinguished. Meantime the subject of this union and inspiration is no way taken from his proper individuality by the state into which he is come, but he appears rather to others, and also seems to himself, to have risen to a more complete and potent individuality than he ever knew before. It is as if he had just here discovered himself and awakened to the consciousness of his sovereignty of all things around him. Knowing that God worketh in him to will and to do, his willing and doing are just so much the more energetic, because he is raised in such a degree by the new flood of movement upon which he is now embarked. He governs himself the more sublimely, and, as it were, imperially, that he is crowned as a king by the inspiration he feels. He is now more than a human person, he is spirit; a human person, that is, pervaded, illuminated, swayed, exalted, empowered, and finally to be glorified, by the life and spirit of God developed freely in him.

The divine spirit, as might be expected, proceeding from Christ, begins and consummates his work by unfolding *Christ* to the soul. For him to live in the soul is to restore the life of Christ

to it, which is the life of God. The spirit undertakes the achievement of a stupendous work. He enters the soul, and proposes to restore the empire of grace, the reign of holiness, and the throne of God. He engages to form all things anew—to create a revolution in favour of Christ and of heaven! He undertakes to change the heart, turning its enmity into love; to collect all the elements of darkness and confusion, educing from them perfect light and perfect order; to subdue the will, bringing it into harmony with God's will; to explore all the recesses of sin, turning its very impurity into holiness; in a word, to regenerate the soul, restoring the divine image and fitting it for the full and eternal enjoyment of God. Now, in accomplishing this great work, what instrumentality does He employ? Passing by all human philosophy, and pouring contempt on the profoundest wisdom and the mightiest power of man, he employs, in the product of a work in comparison with which the rise and the fall of empires were as infant's play, simply and alone, the "truth as it is in Jesus." With this instrument He enters the soul, the seat of the greatest revolution that ever transpired. He moves over the dark chaos, without form and void, and in a moment a world of immortal beauty bursts into view. He overshadows the

soul, and a vital principle is imparted, whose stream of existence, once commenced, flows on with the eternity of God himself.

The Spirit first uncrowns and humbles the pride of man before he glorifies Jesus in the soul's experience. He goes before the Lord to prepare His way, by discovering to the soul its extreme emptiness, poverty, and vileness. He creates a felt necessity for Christ's entrance. He brings the soul into such a position that none but Christ can meet its case. He inflicts a wound which Christ alone can heal. He awakens grief which Christ alone can assuage. He creates a void which Christ only can fill. He takes of the atoning blood of Christ and applies it to the conscience, and the justifying righteousness of Christ and wraps it around the soul; and the sanctifying grace of Christ and conducts it into the heart. All that we truly know of Jesus, all that we have inwardly experienced of his grace, has sprung from the teachings and communications of the divine spirit. He has conducted us to the Fountain—he has led us to the robing-chamber of the King—he has anointed us with the oil of gladness—he has caused our "garments to smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces." Often, when the soul has hungered, he has broken up to us the bread that came down from

heaven! when it has thirsted, He has smitten the rock and satisfied us with its life-giving stream. Often when guilt has distressed us, He has sprinkled anew the peace-speaking blood; and when sorrow has oppressed, and difficulties have embarrassed, and dependencies have failed, and resources have became exhausted, He, the comforter, has suddenly lifted the veil and given to us some new and appropriate and precious view of our *Immanuel*; and in a moment the storm has passed, the waves have stilled, and peace, serenity, and joy, have shed their lustre on the soul; it is as though heaven had expanded its gates and we had passed within, where neither tribulation, nor bereavement, nor darkness, nor loneliness, nor sin, is known any more forever.

As the glorious reformation of the sixteenth century was traceable to a restoration of *Christ* to His *rightful* place as the Mediator and Righteousness of the Church; so, we suppose, that the melancholy pause and reaction which was seen in the progress of that reformation, was traceable to a neglect on the part of the churches to give to the *Holy Spirit* his due place and honors in the system of christianity. Men trusted in the truth, apart from Him, the spirit of truth. They relied on the graves of their reformed fathers instead of the everlasting God of those fathers—on contro-

versies and in creeds, dissevered from prayer for the influences of the Paraclete. The effect was that the chariot of salvation faltered in its course, and its wheels moved heavily, and the banners of Anti-Christ turned again from their earlier flight and its devotees rallied with new courage.

## V.

## THE UNITING BOND.

THE distinction between faith and sight, between what we believe and what we know, is a very familiar one; and its nature is sufficiently obvious. It refers not so much to the *certainty* of an opinion or fact, as to the *evidence* on which it rests. One may be equally certain of that which he believes, as of that which he knows; but he has arrived at his confidence by a different evidence. Knowledge is derived from consciousness, from sensation, from demonstration; Faith springs from testimony and from analogy. I *know*, because I am conscious, because I see, feel, observe, follow the reasonings of science. I *believe* because I am told by witnesses and because analogy renders it probable. But I am just as certain in the one case as in the other. My faith that Columbus lived and visited America, has no more doubt in it, than my consciousness that I live myself. My assurance that the huge bones of the mammoth belonged to a creature having lungs and muscles; and that the splendid

ruins of Palmyra were built and once inhabited by men, is as strong from analogy as my confidence in any one of the propositions of Euclid from demonstration. So that when the Christian believer speaks of his "faith," he uses a term which expresses no less confidence, than when he speaks of what he knows." Indeed, in religious affairs, these are for the most part convertible terms; religious *knowledge*, with scarcely an exception beyond what relates to a man's private experience, is precisely religious *faith*; it is a knowledge, founded, like men's knowledge of distant countries and past ages, on testimony; and he walks by it just as confidently as if he walked by sight.

This being so, it is obvious that the word Faith, as applied to matters of religion, has precisely the same meaning which it has when applied to other subjects or affairs; in other words, it is the same exercise of the mind. The Christian believes by the same constitution and process of mind, by which the merchant believes that there are cities which he has never seen, and the scholar credits the statements of an historian who died two thousand years ago. It belongs to the human mind to believe on evidence; and on sufficient evidence, to believe with the confidence of knowledge. Therefore, the New Testament does the

most natural thing in the world, the most reasonable, the most inevitable thing, when it builds up the Christian Religion on faith, and declares it to be essential to salvation. It could not be otherwise. In the nature of things, there can be no religion, excepting through faith. No man can come to God except he *believe* that He is. No doctrine can be received as from God, except the testimony which establishes it be believed. No teacher can be followed, no futurity sought, no retributions expected, except through faith. The beginning, progress, and end of the soul's existence on earth is and must be a pure process of faith. For it has to do with the past, the absent, the distant, the future, the invisible; and there is no way, no possible way, for man to do with either, except through faith. Wherefore Christianity, rightly, necessarily, and reasonably, finds itself on faith—demands faith of those who receive it, and insists that, without faith, all is vain. The obligation of faith is, therefore, absolute and ineontestible.

According to the New Testament, it is by faith we live, by faith we walk, by faith we overcome, and by faith we receive the salvation of our souls. Faith *looks* to Christ for all we need, in every difficulty, and from every foe. Jesus says, "Look unto me and be ye saved." Here is the warrant

of faith. Faith says, "Therefore will I look unto the Lord, I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me." Here is the purpose of faith. The Lord hears, approves, and answers; and then faith bears testimony saying, "Thou hast dealt well with thy servant, O Lord, according to thy word."

Faith *leans* on Christ. The strongest believer feels his weakness most, and therefore, like the spouse, he comes "up out of the wilderness leaning on his beloved." Faith *carries* every thing to Christ, which keeps up a constant intercourse with him. Faith *receives* every thing from Christ, which keeps alive a sense of dependence and obligation. Faith *uses* the *strength* of Christ, which renders it necessary to realize union and walk close with Him. Faith *lives upon* Christ, for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, and whatever else may be needed. When faith rules and reigns absolutely, *Christ is all*.

"Faith," says one of our profoundest living thinkers, "is committing one's character wholly to the living character of Jesus, so that every willing and working and sentiment shall be pliant to his superior mind and spirit. This faith must go beyond all mere historic credences of opinion; it must include the actual surrender of the man to the Saviour. It must even include the eternity

or finality of that surrender; for if it is made only an experiment, and the design is only to try what the Saviour will do, then it *is experiment*, not *faith*. Any thing and every thing which is necessary to make the soul a *total, final* deposit of *trust* in the Lord Jesus, must be included in this faith, else it is not true faith and cannot have the power of faith. It must be as if, henceforth, the subject saw his every thing in Christ—his righteousness, his whole character, his life-work and death-struggle, and the hope of his eternity. There will be a Christ-power resting upon such a person and operative in him, an immediate knowledge of Christ, as a being revealed in the consciousness. A Christly character will come over him and work itself into him. All his views of life will be changed. The old disturbance will be settled into loving order and a conscious and sweet peace will flow down, like a divine river, through the soul, watering all its dryness. It will be in liberty, free to good; wanting only opportunities to do God's will. Fear will be cast out, confidence established, hope anchored, and all the great eternity to come taken possession of. Christ will constrain every motion, in such a way that no constraint will be felt, and the new man will be so exhilarated in obedience, and raised so high in the sense of God upon him, that sacrifice itself

will be joy, and the fires of martyrdom a chariot to the victor soul." It is the Lord Jesus Christ, working through the operation of His Spirit, and truth, that illuminates and quickens the mind and causes it to centre its affections upon himself as God Incarnate and as the way, the truth, and the life. Once the person only gave a cold and careless thought to Christ, as some historical personage. He saw no beauty that he should desire him, no worth that he should choose Him. His bosom never glowed with a beam of genial warmth. The cross itself was a sound that awakened no emotion. Neither Gethsemane or Calvary had any charms for him. He considered the joys of believers as enthusiasm, and their attestations to the preciousness of Him whom unseen they loved, as little better than cant. But now what a change has come over him in reference to the Saviour of his soul. His name is music, his person the object of admiration, love, and delight, his work the cause of unbounded gratitude, His example the perfection of beauty, and His commandments a law most pleasant to be obeyed. He is indeed "precious," the chief among ten thousand and the one altogether lovely. What has produced this change of sentiment, feeling, and choice? What is it that has made the subject of this change thus voluntarily take up

the yoke he once spurned, and that impels him on to devotedness, obedience and self-denial? He has been apprehended of Christ and brought by the power of a divine faith into living relationship to Him, and is therefore, enabled to say "For me to live is Christ." "I live, yet not I, but *Jesus Christ liveth in me*, and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God.

## VI.

## A PRINCIPLE OF POWER.

WHEN the *life* of *Christ* is communicated, through the instrumentality of faith, to the souls of believers, it makes them the sons of God and the heirs of a glorious inheritance. It becomes in them an active, influential, powerful, and operative principle, which governs the heart and regulates the life as its supreme and controlling force. The various representations and images employed by the Holy Spirit to describe the nature of true religion, suppose it always to be a principle of power. According to the Scriptures, religion burns and glows like fire, penetrates and flavors like salt, sweeps and forces like the wind, struggles for development like a "well of water springing up;" influences and transforms like heaven, and bids defiance to all the elements of darkness, like the day-spring from on high. It is described in *action*, as laboring with strenuous effort, as striving even to agony, as running in a contested race, as wrestling with every might of bone and muscle, as fighting a deadly combat, as hungering

and thirsting for righteousness, as panting for the living God. No mere *form* of religion can ever correspond to such representations and images as these. They all necessarily imply activity of principle and force of character. Genuine, Scriptural religion influences and controls the entire man, his mind, his will, his passions, his tempers and dispositions; and since it influences the whole machinery of man, it must influence his conduct. *What he believes* makes him differ from every unbeliever. His judgments and opinions are shaped and directed by the authority of God, and he cordially loves and approves all the truths revealed by Him. He feels that it is much safer to be steered under the powerful influence of this unearthly magnet than to be "tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine," which ever blew from Athens or from Rome.

The inward power of this divine principle is made evident and manifest by its results. It draws the sluggish heart to irradiate its affections to things that are above; it constrains man to resign and forsake his darling sin; it impels him to acquire and produce good; it excites him to fervid love and glowing compassion for the souls of men; it urges him to arduous and unwearied efforts to ameliorate the world; it fortifies him against all opposition, discouragement and in-

gratitude; it supports him under all the buffettings of men, and the languishings of his own heart; it curbs and subdues in his passions every thing rampant, disorderly, and likely to injure his usefulness; and it bears him aloft and along, far from the enclosures of selfishness, to a holier region of feeling, and to a loftier and wider sphere of thought and effort for the glory of Christ. It is the *love of Christ* constraining him. This is the spring that moves his energies, the atmosphere where his prayers breathe, and the element where his graces live and act. "Mind," said the philosopher, "is omnipotent over matter." So divine faith and love are omnipotent over mind. Christians can do all things and discharge all duties, through Christ strengthening them. When they throw themselves upon this strength and rely with absolute confidence upon it, they cower before no opposition, they are appalled by no difficulty, abashed by no foe, they shrink from no conflict, succumb to no splendid iniquity, bow to no formidable titles, evade no obligation, avoid no unwelcome duty, and spare no sin.

## VII.

## THE BIRTH OF THE CHURCH.

It was at Bethabara, beyond Jordan, amid the wild solitudes of the Judæan Desert that the Church of Christ was born. The voice of the messenger that went before to prepare the way for the Saviour was sounding in the ears of the expectant people when the Lord, whom he proclaimed and they sought, suddenly came to His temple, the living temple of those true hearts whom God's secret grace had made ready to welcome Him. The preaching of repentance thus fitly ushered in the preaching of peace, the sharp probing of legal conviction going before the healing balm of grace. One day soon after the wondrous scene at the Jordan when he had administered to his august successor that significant rite which was to him the solemn investiture of his office, John the Baptist was standing with two of his disciples, when the mysterious stranger passed by. John looked suddenly up and pointing with his hand, exclaimed, "Behold the Lamb of God!" It proved to be a word spoken in season and in-

stantly produced its effect. "The two disciples heard John speak, and they followed Jesus," passing at once within the circle of that divine attraction from which they never afterwards escaped. The name of one of these disciples is one well known to us. It was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. The convert at once becomes a missionary. "He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, we have found the Messias, and he brought him to Jesus." Thus already were three faithful souls gathered round the Lord, and united under Him in a holy fellowship of life and love, of which the whole Church throughout all the world and throughout all time is but the increase and expansion. The circle soon widens. Jesus finds Philip; Philip finds Nathaniel. John and James at their fishing nets, Matthew at the receipt of custom, obey the divine call of grace; and so all the rest, one by one, till the mystic twelve was complete and the first nucleus of the Church was fully formed. Thus the twelve foundation stones of that divine City of God were laid, which in all succeeding ages has been rising up according to the one predestined plan and advancing onward to its bright consummation.

Immediately thereafter the work of conversion went on slowly but steadily. Jesus spake as

never man spake, and his words found a response in many hearts. While the Pharisees frowned, the Sadducees sneered, and the populace, with characteristic fickleness, now shouted and now blasphemed, there were every where hidden ones who recognized in Him their true Shepherd and followed him. "He came unto His own and His own received Him not." But some there were who did receive Him, and "to them He gave power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believed on His name, which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." One by one they came, as the divine spirit moved and drew them, from the East and West and North and South, within the limits of the chosen land, even as afterwards through the whole world, and "sat down in the kingdom of God." Zaccheus, Mary, Martha, Lazarus, the Magdalene, Joseph of Arimathea, Nicodemus, were but a few examples of that first gospel harvest which the Divine Reaper gathered in with His own hand. But that peerless ministry soon reached its close. Its great design was not so much to build the temple as to lay the foundation on which after laborers should build up the living stones to the world's end. After three brief and chequered years of toil, that life of love which began in the manger was ter-

minated on the cross. The Church was still a little flock. The whole multitude of the faithful to whom the departing Saviour bade farewell, was probably no larger than a single congregation of Christian worshippers of the present day. But it was not in numbers only that the Church was in its infancy. In knowledge, in faith, in self-denying love, in moral and spiritual strength, and in every other element of its new and divine life, it was weak as a new-born babe. Carried hitherto in the Saviour's arms, and nursed by His ever present care, it seemed wholly incapable of standing alone. But a new era is approaching. It is on the very eve of a great, decisive crisis in its history, which shall do more for it in a single day than whole years or centuries of common time; and by which it is destined to pass all at once from the weakness of helpless nonage to the full stature and strength of perfect manhood in *Christ*.

## VIII.

## ITS SPIRITUAL BAPTISM.

If the scene at Bethabara was the Church's birth, that of Pentecost was as truly its baptism. There, like a feeble babe, was it brought to the Saviour's arms, and by Him bathed in the new creating waters of life. The mystic prophecy of the Baptist received at once its explanation and its fulfilment. "I indeed baptize with water unto repentance, but there cometh one after me greater than I, He shall baptize you with the *Holy Ghost* and with *fire*. Coming up from the mystic waters, the Church was now endued with a larger and fuller and stronger life. New light, new love, new hopes and longings, new convictions and resolves, new and grander views of the divine, eternal plan of the Incarnate God thrill through all its being, and the consciousness of new power fires its heart. It sees all things henceforth in heaven and earth with other eyes and feels and responds to them with another spirit. It is now strong, resolute, brave, full of buoyant life and hope; and prepared to do battle against all the world, in the

name and for the sake of its glorious Head. Christianity is now fully inaugurated as life and spirit in the world. The Church is now alive. He that was crucified and rose again and ascended to heaven, lives visibly in it now. The members of it have an unction from the Holy One that teaches and leads them. The preaching is a ministration of the spirit. It is luminous by a divine light within. Incredible as it may seem, the fire that is thus kindled catches and spreads, till its light is seen and its sanctifying power felt throughout the Roman Empire.

In the Pentecostal Church, thus fully constituted and endued with divine life from above, we behold the image and the type of the true and living Church of Christ in all after times. Thus, *first*, it was *supernatural and divine*. The power which newly formed and fashioned it was a power direct from heaven. It was the creature not of circumstance, or of education, or of human contrivance and policy, but of the immediate presence and working of the new-creating spirit of God.

It was also *Catholic*; for even at that first outset of its career it gathered in its members from every region under heaven: "Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judæa, and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of

Lybia around Cyrene." Even thus in its infancy it was a meet emblem of that one universal Church whose field is the world and within whose ample pale "there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision or uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond or free, but *Christ* is *all* and *in all*.

It was also *discriminative* and *selective*. It drew in its accessions from all sides but did not draw in all. It brought in men, not in masses and crowds, but individually, one by one, by personal conviction and conversion, through that solemn gate of life on which is written, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

It was *expansive*. The spirit that dwelt within it longed and sought to communicate itself to all around it. It was essentially and emphatically evangelistic. It was at once aggressive and attractive. It worked like leaven; it ran like fire; it germinated and multiplied itself like seed.

Finally, it was *spiritual* and *free*. It was not so much a hierarchy as a brotherhood. It was not an outward organization, but a living society. It was a kingdom, indeed, but a kingdom which is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Outward forms of administration and of worship were indeed necessary in their own way, but in their

nature they occupy a secondary and not a primary place. They touch not the being, but only the well-being of the Church. They are *not* the *Church*, but exist for the *Church*, "for the perfecting of the saints, for the edification of the body of *Christ*.

## IX.

## CHRIST ITS FOUNDATION.

WHILE this Church, this holy, spiritual, true, saving Church, is begotten of the Spirit and lives by virtue of the presence and indwelling of the Spirit, it is also true of it that it is built on Christ as its corner stone. "To whom coming (saith St. Peter) as unto a living stone, ye also as lively stones are built up a spiritual house." Christ in His divinity and humanity, in His sacrifice and death, in His resurrection and ascension, is the very being of the Church. Not only did He found it; not only does He sustain it, and enlighten and defend it, but He is personally and directly the life thereof. Because He is such to each individual believer, therefore is He the same to the whole fellowship of believers. Does the single Christian say, "For me to live is Christ," the whole mystical union or body of true Christians composing the Church of God, must say the same. It is only because all the building is, in every individual part, "framed together in *Him*," in *Him* as its righteousness, in *Him* as its sancti-

fication, in Him as all its strength and life, that "it groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord." According to another form of expression, "Our life is hid with Christ in God." It is all there, in the infinite depths, in the inexhaustible riches, in the inviolable security of that divine nature which is in Him. Against *this* Church the gates of hell cannot prevail, because the seat and source and power of its life are not in the world, not in any community of men, not in any human priesthood, not in the body of the Church, not exposed to any of the infirmities of our nature, but in *Christ*, the *Incarnate*, the *Emmanuel*.

X.

ITS MEMBERS HAVE THE SAME MARKS.

IN every age of this Church, it is true of all its members that they have been and are distinguished by the same marks. The common life that has been revealed in and through them has produced a common likeness. They were all "born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Through His abundant mercy they have been begotten to a lively hope. Hence they are called the children of God, as a term of distinction. "For as many," says an Apostle, "as are led by the Spirit of God, *they are the sons of God.*" They are clothed with His image, and are made partakers of a divine nature. They are, moreover, brought into the relation of children by an act of adoption. They have received power to become the sons of God. They all draw water from the same wells of salvation and partake of the same living bread. It is their meat to do the will of their heavenly Father. Spiritual enjoyments are the objects of their ardent desire. For these they hunger and

thirst, and without them, in whatever respects enriched, they feel themselves to be poor and wretched and in want of all things. They all gaze with admiration upon the spiritual beauties of their divine Lord, and in the appropriate and triumphant language of the spouse exclaim, "this is my beloved and this is my friend." They desire not merely the form of godliness but the power. It is their highest ambition not merely to possess religion but to go on to perfection, to wax stronger and stronger. That they may obtain the victory over their lusts, they are habitually maintaining the Christian warfare and fighting the good fight of faith. They press forward in the Christian race that they may obtain the incorruptible crown. They long to be more humbled on account of their sin, and their daily prayer is that they may be holy as God is holy; that their hearts may ever be warmed with His love and their mouths be filled with His praise. These are some of the marks that distinguish the members of the Church of Christ in every age, and in every part of the world. Paul and Peter, and John and Luther, and Melanchthon and Calvin, and Knox and Howe, and Charnock and Flavel, and Baxter and Doddridge, and Martyn and Brainerd, and Edwards and Wesley, and Whitfield and Dwight, and Payson and Davies, and all the true sons of

God, the world over, carried with them the same inward and outward marks of the divine life. Impelled by the love of one common Lord, and baptized with one common Spirit, they thought and purposed and prayed and wept, and preached and wrote, and struggled and labored, for one common object, the recovery of lost and perishing men to the fold of Christ.

## XI.

## NOT DEPENDENT ON HUMAN AGENCY.

THIS is a Church which is dependent upon no ministers upon earth, however much it values those who preach the gospel to its members. The life of its members does not hang on Church membership and baptism and the Lord's Supper, although they highly value these things when they are to be had. But it has one Great Head, one Shepherd, one Chief Bishop, and that is Jesus Christ. He alone by His spirit admits the members of this Church, though ministers may show the door. Till He opens the door, no man on earth can open it, neither Bishops, nor Presbyters, nor Councils, nor Synods. Once let a man repent and believe the gospel, and that moment he becomes a member of this Church. Like the penitent thief, he may have no opportunity of being baptized. But He has that which is far better than any water-baptism, the baptism of the spirit. He may not be able to receive the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper, but he eats Christ's body and drinks Christ's blood by faith

every day he lives, and no minister on earth can prevent him. He may be excommunicated by ordained men and cut off from the outward ordinances of the professing Church, but all the ordained men in the world can not shut him out of the true Church. In the depths of the savage wilderness, amid the foaming billows of the stormy ocean, or on the thunder-scarred mountain peaks, the incense of an honest heart can rise in prayer to the omnipotent and merciful Father as fervently and as welcomely as from beneath the lofty cathedral dome. And even when the lips move not, and when the eyes, weighed down by sickness and sorrow are closed, the heart, gratefully devout, can throb its silent adoration as sacredly as if it mingled its tones with the melody of thousands, and bowed ostentatiously before altar and priest. This true Church then evidently does not depend on forms, ceremonies, cathedrals, church edifices, chapels, pulpits, fonts, vestments, organs, endowments, money, kings, governments, magistrates, or any act or favor from the hand of men. It has often lived on and continued when all these things have been taken from it. It has often been driven into the wilderness or into dens and caves of the earth, by those who ought to have been its friends. But its existence depends on nothing

but the gracious presence of Christ and the power of His spirit, and so long as they are with it the Church cannot die. In every age its song has been:

“Thou hidden source of calm repose,  
Thou all-sufficient Love Divine,  
My help and refuge from my foes,  
Secure I am if Thou art mine;  
And lo! from sin, and grief, and shame,  
I hide me, Jesus, in thy name.”

## XII.

## ITS HONORABLE TITLES.

THIS is the Church to which the titles of present honor and privilege and the promises of future glory especially belong. This is the *body of Christ*; He inhabits and actuates it and adorns it with His graces. This is the bride of Christ; it wears the robe of His righteousness and is beautiful in his sight. This is the Lamb's wife, united to the Lamb in the most intimate bonds, and loved and protected and provided for by Him. This is the flock of Christ, chosen, inspected, governed and fed by Him. This is the household of faith and family of God. God dwells in them and among them and administers to them the tokens of his grace and rules them with love. This is God's building, and the temple of the Holy Ghost; it has its foundation in Christ. On his person, office and work it is built, and in all its ordinances, faith, profession, offices and blessings, it depends on Him. This is the Church of the First born whose names are written in heaven. It is divinely set apart to the service of God, and

made the instrument of incalculable good to others. This is the royal priesthood, the chosen generation, the peculiar people, the purchased possession, the habitation of God, the light of the world, the salt of the earth. These titles, employed by the inspired penmen to represent the Church, are altogether inapplicable to any one of the visible ecclesiastical organizations that have sprung into existence over the face of the world. They evidently mean something purer, better, higher, holier than any one of these, and must therefore designate that *Church* whose members are all united to Christ by the bond of Christian faith. This is the "Holy Catholic Church," of the Apostle's Creed. This is the "One Catholic and Apostolic Church," of the Nicene Creed. This is the Church to which the Lord Jesus says, "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

## XIII.

## IT HAS TRUE UNITY.

THIS is the only Church which possesses true unity. The unity of the Church of Christ is not unity in form, not unity in discipline, not unity in government, but consists in having "one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism." One Lord—Christ Jesus the living Head. One Faith—the whole revealed Word, believed with the heart, the vital bond which unites every believer with that Head. And one Baptism—the baptism of the Holy Ghost, that which puts the breathing of a divine life into the whole body so constituted and so united. The unity of the true spiritual Church lies in *really having* these divine things. The unity of the visible Church, the merely professing Church, lies in outwardly professing these things, though in reality all the members have them not.

"There needs to be," says a strong thinker, "a revision of our current impressions in reference to the value of doctrinal platforms and articles of scientific divinity, taken as bonds of unity and defences of purity, Christ and His Apostles

manifestly had no such conception of unity as that any external ligament of opinion or science may compass it and fasten it. Christian unity, in their view, is not a fascicle, but a tree vitalized by a common life, 'I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.' It is 'holding the head,' and under it being 'fitly joined together.' It is moral, not logical; of the heart, not of the head. It is precisely what an Apostle means when he speaks of 'the unity of the Spirit,' under which there is of course one body or embodiment, as there is 'one Spirit,' 'one Lord' above, 'one Baptism,' as the outward profession of that faith, and then as the soul, the internal, vivifying principle of all, 'one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.' Discarding this magnificent view of internal brotherhood in the life, dogma early undertook to build an external scientific unity; and then exactly that followed which only could follow, viz: that, as the heads which propagate dogma are *many*, not *one*, so the Church ceasing to be one, became, externally viewed, as many as the heads. Manifestly no human opinion could have scope and force to unify all thought or belief under it, and the more stringently it insists on containing the world in its human measures, the more certain it is that dissent, disruption, and all manner of discord will

follow. So it has been, so it ever will be. These attempts to settle the world into unity under the external bonds of opinion, continually defeated, have been continually insisted on, and so the divisions and sub-divisions have been constantly growing finer, till now at last the imposture is discovered, the articles of opinion that were to be the bonds and bases of a unity externally constructed, in place of the vital unity of the Spirit, have fretted away at last even the appearance of unity. May we not all begin to see that the ministration of life is somewhat broader, deeper, more sufficient, more divine than dogma or opinion? And what if we all, feeling our deep want and sorrowing over the shame our human wisdom has cost us, should come back together to the simple 'Father, Son and Holy Ghost, one God,' there to enter into peace through the blood of Jesus, and there to abide in the fulness of love and brotherhood, or if we should kneel down together before Him and say: '*I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth,*' and go on thus to '*the life everlasting,*' what invisible Minister of God, hanging as a listener about us, would not join us at the close and say '*Amen!*'"

## XIV.

## IT POSSESSES TRUE SANCTITY.

THIS is the only Church which possesses true holiness. The Church of Rome is called holy in its catechism, because, as a body, it is separated in the same sense in which the vessels of the tabernacle, or as the Jewish Church was, to the service of God; the instruments and signs of separation, being a *profession* of the true faith and the Sacrament of Baptism. Because, as that Church believes, *in the Church* are to be found the means of sanctity. Such, according to the Romish doctrine, is the only sanctity which is predicate of the body of Christ; the individual members of which, therefore, may be, for anything to the contrary in the theory, *destitute of personal holiness*. By those who "believe and have been baptized into Christ," are meant, according to the teachings of that Church, *not true believers*, but all who, whatever may be their inward state, *profess* the Christian faith and receive the Sacrament externally.

With the true Church, the Church of Christ, on the other hand, *real sanctity* is deemed an

*essential* characteristic of the body of Christ. Christ died to procure the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit. When he ascended on high, leading captivity captive, he received gifts for men, and of these gifts the Holy Spirit was the principal. This gift he began to pour out on the day of Pentecost, and he continues to pour it out upon His Church to sanctify and cleanse it, agreeably to His promise in the thirty-sixth chapter of Ezekiel: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you." The Word of God is the grand instrument by which the Spirit of God awakens the future members of Christ's Church from spiritual slumber, convinces them of their naturally sinful and miserable condition, and creates them anew or regenerates them to a new life. Hence they are said to be born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God which liveth and abideth forever. A church which is offensive by her own uncleansed sins, or clotted with the guilt of crucifying to herself afresh the Son of God, will never persuade or win the world to believe that Christ died to save from sin, and that the Holy Spirit sanctifies the heart.

It should ever be borne in mind that the neces-

sity of holiness is absolute. With regard to other things, some, though desirable, are not essential; and others, though essential under ordinary circumstances, are not universally and absolutely necessary. But holiness is necessary in such a sense that salvation without it is impossible, because salvation consists in this very transformation of the heart. Jesus is a Saviour because He *saves His people from their sins*. Those, therefore, who are not sanctified, are not saved. The doctrine that a man may live in sin and still be in a state of salvation, is as much a contradiction as to say that a man may be ill when in health. A state of salvation is a *state of holiness*. The two things are inseparable; because salvation is not mere redemption from the *penalty* of sin, but deliverance from its *power*. Salvation is, therefore, always begun on earth. Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath eternal life. Christians, and of such only are the true, saving Church composed, are partakers of a holy calling, they are washed and sanctified and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God. They are saints, the sanctified in Christ Jesus. They mind spiritual things. They have crucified the flesh, with its affections and lusts. Their conversation is in heaven; from whence also they look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus

Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto Himself. For the full union which is to take place between Christ and a converted world, a union which shall be consummated amid the rapturous symphonies of a gladdened universe, John describes the Church as a bride making herself ready, putting from her all her sackcloth of mourning, and all her trappings of worldly power, tearing from herself everything forbidding and repulsive, and enrobing herself with every form of attraction that was calculated to persuade, to win, to fascinate. The holiness, inward, vital, real, all-pervading, purifying, which characterizes the Church of Christ, it may be almost useless to remark, does not consist in a zeal for architecture and sculpture, for surplices and robes, for postures and genuflexions, for sacraments and ceremonies, for fasts and festivals, for apostolical succession and episcopal ordination, for priestly mediation and prelatrical authority, for absolution and confession, for the position of a font and the furniture and shape of the altar—which enter into the religion of so many deluded persons in the present day. No! No! It is as simple and beautiful as its divine original, “*Faith* working by *love* and purifying the *heart*.”

## XV.

## IT IS TRULY APOSTOLIC.

It will be admitted by all intelligent Christians that the Lord Jesus Christ, the true Messiah, is the possessor of all authority in the universe. "All power," said He, "in heaven and earth is given to me." In virtue of this He gave the Eleven His commission to disciple the nations to Him. All ecclesiastical or sacerdotal power must, therefore, emanate from him. He is the Head of His body, the Church, and headship consists undeniably in the authorization of the action of the members of the body. With this in fullest view, the Apostle spoke of himself as possessed of no power save that which the Lord had given him for edification, not for destruction. It was because the Lord had given the Apostles the power to loose and bind, that they authoritatively propounded the terms of salvation, assigning the obedient to salvation, and consigning the obdurate to perdition. The terms which they laid down remain in force till the Lord himself, the Author of them, repeal them. No tribunal

inferior to that which instituted may repeal. It follows, therefore, that *submission* to the *Apostolic deliverances* is the *sum of all Christian action*. No disciple, or body of disciples, holding any office or doing any work, may assert their independence of these prescriptions, or do aught else than is provided therein, in any case whatever. It is not competent for brethren doing oversight work, to act as lords or dictators over the heritage, nor for any brother who speaks, to speak else than as do the oracles of God. This rule observed, the question of power is a very simple one. A Christian's power is square with his conformity in word and deed to the oracles of God. Beyond this he has none, and is not to be recognized as having any. In this there is all authority that is either needful, wholesome, or safe for the Churches of the Saints. "Whatever is more than this comes of evil."

Christ then, and His Apostles, comprise the only Christian legislature in the universe. All ecclesiastical legislatures else are frauds, impositions, usurpations, seditions, heresies, treasons, tyrannies. Successors they had none, nor could they have. The edifice planned, founded, and reared, the architects were no longer needed about the building. To talk of Apostles of Christ on earth now, is to manifest a folly that might be

laughed at as the offspring of childish ignorance, but for the ruinous danger of the assumption.

But the mimicking of Apostolic power is not confined to the establishing of legislative church courts and councils, and the framing, promulgating, and enforcing of ecclesiastical decrees; it reaches to an additional form of procedure, which is the pretended communication of grace, virtue, power, or gift, by the imposition of clerical hands. There is no propriety, we think, in Protestants pronouncing against the pretended transubstantiation and other false miracles of the Romish Church, while they themselves pretend to convey a spiritual or sacerdotal virtue by the laying on the hands of their own priesthood. By this act on the part of the Apostles the Holy Spirit was really communicated, spiritual gifts were actually bestowed, the sick were healed, the dead were raised. • But where find we any such verities in the clerical imposition of hands of these times? Yet, although the actors know they have no power so to convey either the Spirit or the gifts of the Spirit, they impiously say in performing the farce, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost.” That the Apostles and other brethren laid on hands in the giving of *charge*, and in commanding those charged to the grace of God, several passages of Scripture clearly testify. (Acts vi, 6; XIII, 3; XIV, 23; and XV, 40.) To

this custom there can be no objection, in so far as it is not made the occasion of false and priestly pretension. That brethren who have had a charge, lay hands on others, now to be associated with them in its duties, or to whom they are to surrender the work, and in so doing, mean simply to commend them by this act, combined with prayer and fasting, to the favor of God, is quite within Apostolic precedent; but that men should claim to be invested with Apostolic power to bestow the Spirit, by virtue of the laying on of their hands, and thus introduce one into the ministry and clothe him with the same plenary power, is not only grossly unscriptural, but is a mark of the apostasy. Said a venerable Bishop more than two hundred years ago, "They are the successors of the Apostles that succeed in virtue, holiness, truth and so forth; not they that sit upon the same stool." Another old author describes true Apostolical succession as "Successio Spiritus Dei, doctrinæ Evangelii, et ministerii divini." This succession belongs to this Holy Catholic Church. It is built on the foundation laid by the Apostles, and holds firmly and uncompromisingly to the doctrine which they preached. It believes that the Apostles have given us in their writings ample directions respecting the whole relations of life; so much so that there is instruction for the

ignorant, reproof for the sinful, correction for the erring, and direction for the humble, that the man of God may be perfect in all the will of God and thoroughly equipped for all the good works required of him. The two grand objects at which the members of this Church aim are Apostolic *faith* and Apostolic *practice*, and they consider the person who talks of following the Apostles without these two things, to be no better than sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. If the virtue and efficacy of Christ's redeeming grace had attempted to flow down to successive generations, through the men who have monopolized the claim to Apostolical succession, it would have often found the channel to be a very nasty and offensive one. If such men were like the Apostles, then we would be compelled to form a very unfavorable opinion of the Apostles themselves.

## XVI.

## IT IS THE WORKING CHURCH.

THIS is the Church which does the work of Christ upon the earth. If Christianity be a life, it must also be a work, a force, an energy. The tendencies of life are ever toward activity. It is declared to be life eternal to know Jesus Christ; that is, through the knowledge of him we become partakers of his life. And what was this life of his? Was it that of the mystic, a dreamy, contemplative, apathetic life? Was it an inner life merely, a life spent in seclusion, in isolation, in self-tormenting, self-scrutinizing exercises? Or was it a life of luxurious and inglorious ease? It was none of these, but on the other hand, was an active, devoted, self-sacrificing life. He came into the world to do His father's will and glorify Him, and with matchless zeal He entered upon the work and accomplished it; so that he could say "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." Now the change implied in a true Christian experience or the unfolding of the life of Christ in the heart, is in its very nature the soul

and root of an outward change that is corresponding. The faith implanted is a faith that works in appropriate demonstrations, and *must* as certainly work, as a living heart must beat or pulsate. It is the righteousness of God revealed within, to be henceforth the actuating spring and power of a righteous and devoted life. It will inform the whole man. It will glow in the countenance. It will irradiate the eye. It will speak from the tongue. It will modulate the very gait. It will enter into all the transactions of business, the domestic tempers, the social manifestations and offices. It will make the man a benefactor and call him into self-sacrifice for God and the truth. It will send him forth to be God's advocate with men and require him, in that manner, to make full testimony, either formally or by implication, of what God has done for him. *The inward change is no reality, but a pure fiction, if it does not issue in this.* Many, we have reason to believe, are deceiving themselves with a religion which is neither work nor pleasure, but only a name. They have perverted the doctrine of justification by faith without works into an excuse for the neglect of works altogether. They seem to imagine that faith is an opiate instead of a stimulant, Calvary a place of slumber instead of labor, and the Cross a goal instead of a starting

point. When we are converted, instead of considering our labor done, we should remember it is just begun. Did Christ die to save sinners? He commissions Christians for this noble enterprise, and leads them, as an army, to the relief of a captive world. If they are faithless or remiss no soul will be saved. He does not call on angels to turn many to righteousness; but to achieve this he has appointed the instrumentality of the Church and it is by this alone that he will save a soul from death. The members of this true Church *always* hear and obey the voice of their Captain commanding them to "go forward." They throw themselves earnestly and fearlessly into the great battle which Christ is waging against sin, and struggle hard to achieve the victory. Though its members, in the successive centuries of the world's history have always been a little flock and few in number compared with the children of the world, still they have been able to shake and mould the world. By their prayers they have won victories over fire, air, earth, and water, and changed the fortunes of kingdoms. They have always proven themselves to be the life-blood of every village, town, church, city, community, country, the shield, the defence, the stay and the support of any and every nation to which they belong.

## XVII.

## DIFFERS FROM ECCLESIASTICAL ORGANIZATION.

FROM the representation we have given of the *Church* in its truest, highest, best sense, it will be seen at once that it is a totally different thing from any form of ecclesiastical organization. The various forms of Church government are merely accidents. The Church can exist in connection with any of them as it existed anterior to any of them. Nor have the two ideas any essential or necessary connection. The external organization represents the union of men with each other; the Church of Christ represents the spiritual union of men to Christ, who is the Head. The two ideas *may* come practically into diametrical opposition. It is very possible to construct an organization by which men may be held together under a particular name, and which will pledge them to uphold particular doctrines and unite in the performance of particular rites, even for a long succession of ages. This organization may continue after the last vestige of true piety, and every distinctive feature of Christianity, has

perished from among them. Such is the fact, at the present moment among many of the nations denominated Christian. In many parts of what is called Christendom, the very *words* of *Christ* are kept from the people; the doctrines of the cross are a grievous offence, and the preaching of the gospel has been made the occasion of persecution of which the heathen would be ashamed; and this persecution has been exerted by ecclesiastics themselves, bearing the name of Christ and claiming to be the successors of the Apostles. If, then, an organization may unite men under the name of Christianity, while it cultivates hostility to the very teachings of Christ; if while it claims to be the Church of Christ, it persecutes unto the death the true members of His body, this organization and the Church of Christ not only may be, but must be, essentially different communities.

## XVIII.

## TENDS TO VISIBLE ORGANISM.

BUT while there may be and often is this antagonism between ecclesiasticism and vital Christianity, it is still true that Christianity extends to visible organization and to exterior effects. Spiritual though it be in its essence, "it is not unclothed, but clothed upon." It is a living and central principle, gathering to itself an exquisitely perfect assemblage of members and instrumental powers. Though individualizing in its operation, it is not isolating. It ordains new relations among men, and sublimates the social nature, which it sanctifies to a correspondence with its own ends. It imposes a new law upon those whom it has cemented into a spiritual brotherhood, and ranks with the most heinous and punishable offences those violations of it which would rend the bonds of this unity and dismember the Lord's own body.

The religious life is self-attractive. Existing in various individuals, these individuals tend toward each other and to a common centre. The

Christian, loving God himself, is drawn to all who love Him. As men who may never have seen each other before, and are perfectly unacquainted with each other's history, and with no particular relation or affinity, will, on being thrown together discover a bond of sympathy in their attachment to a common friend; so true Christians, between whom no natural tie exists, either of relationship or acquaintance, find a bond of sympathy in their common Saviour. More than all beside, they love and cleave to them that love Him. Again, the Christian, loving God, loves whatsoever is God-like. Far more than any earthly distinction, such as wealth or rank or station confers; more than any personal or mental endowment, does he prize his Father's image. And when he sees that image in any one, he prefers his society to that of the man, who, lacking this, is greatly his superior in all those distinctions. Thus being one in Christ they necessarily are one in sympathy, and tend to develop that unity in outward organism. \*

The *oneness* of all true Christians is reiterated by the New Testament, and this oneness is affirmed to be the work of the Holy Ghost; hence the command to keep "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." This description separates the Evangelical unity from a mere political conven-

tionalism or any artificial form of combination. "The unity of the Spirit" is more than the platform of the Church, the inspired ordinance for its creation or its government. In other words, it is something distinct from and prior to its organization and embodiment. It is the very nature, soul, and being of it, and springs out of the mystery of an implanted spiritual life, as do all the forms of social life from the nature of humanity itself. It is the kingdom of God in its proper economical and moral development. It is nothing brought and added to it, but its own expanded self. It is a fountain overflowing from many little hidden springs, whose individuality is lost in the body of its waters, but whose beneficent copiousness flows in the long, winding, fertilizing river. "The unity of the Spirit" is the gift of a universal soul to the Church, with its proper organization for functions and effects. Its essential unity is the parent of the order intended to maintain it and to produce its full moral impression on the world. Order, again, implies law and its administration, by which only man, in every corporate capacity, can be made mutually helpful. Yet it is not a system of feudalism, but of *familyism*. Its rulers are brethren, not lords; servants, not masters. Like angels they have their orders of ministry, their divine liturgy, but with no priest-

hood or royalty; while their succession is not after a written genealogy, but the voice of the Spirit, as the wind bloweth where it listeth, and leaves only to man the office of verifying his election and countersigning his title.

The unity of the Spirit, then, considered as the soul and pattern of the Church, is consistent with varieties of administration and differences of theological opinion. It is not broken by such shades of sentiment and external mould, as do not imply a denial of, or apostacy from, the *Head*, the grand term of life or the lack of that moral glory which the Church is to hold up before the world. The traces of man's handiwork are perhaps nowhere shown so clearly or so mischievously, as in his ideal transcripts of the Church as the work of God. Indeed we may safely say that the full truth and spirit of this divine object were never caught by theorists or ecclesiastical innovators, any more than nature's life, spirit and power are transferable to the marble or the canvas.

## XIX.

## GENUINE MATERIAL OF THE CHURCH.

THE spirit and life of Christianity must be present, or the genuine material of a Church, according to the New Testament history and doctrine, is wanting. In its absence the best compacted forms are only negative things, luxurious perhaps to sense, but inanities to faith; mere shadows, not the moulds of a teeming life; tasteful, but fraudulently artificial. They beguile and destroy the unwary. They engross, but cannot convert. They may enchant their votaries by sympathy with the gorgeous and the imaginative in their symbols and scenic exhibitions; or they may petrify by the drippings of a cold, rationalistic, and merely moral teaching, but leave them destitute of the birthright and blessing of a true Evangelism. Moreover, forms, apart from their represented principle, are fixed and immutable things. They do not adjust themselves to the varieties of religious feeling, as certain instruments employed to signify the changes of atmospheric temperature. They resemble the

edifices which admit successive generations of worshippers, without cognizance of either the living or the dead; or the bay which never counts the tides that have washed its shores, or the sails that have whitened its waves. Growth and maturity, health and disease, are phenomena of life, not of death. Death, as being a negative, is unchangeable. The positive of existence only, can run through the scale of degrees. Life's functions and habits are innumerable, but artistic copies of it have a stationary oneness. Dagon, though a God, if unreal, must be *set* in his place; and Bel and Nebo must be transported on beasts because they cannot go. So of the artificial in religion, territorial occupancy and customal sanction, are all it requires.

The Church of Christ, as originally constituted, was purely republican. Christ commissioned all His disciples to go forth and proclaim the truth, giving them no authority over others, no pre-eminence among themselves. Of all kinds of instruction, religious exercises were to be the most free. Every Apostle received wisdom from the original source, and acted on his responsibility under Christ, in its distribution. Paul, the last accession to the Apostolic band, was the most independent and powerful. He boasts that he received his doctrine straightway from God and

not from those "who were Apostles before him." He would not allow the Council at Jerusalem to cripple his spirit by their decision, but expanded his views beyond Jewish bigotry and local prejudice, under the legitimate influence of that ennobling Christianity which he loved and heroically toiled to spread abroad. In those days Christians were "a royal priesthood," all of them being "kings and priests" appointed to offer "a spiritual sacrifice." When for practical purposes a church organization was required, the synagogue was adopted as their model, which claimed no power to domineer; and *not* the temple whose officers assumed the exercise of high governmental powers. Their Elders and Deacons were chosen by popular suffrage, and were as much of the people after their election as before. The distinction between clergy and laity, as now frequently made, was unknown; all were sons of God upon whom the Holy Ghost in equal measures fell. They were "anointed of God," and "knew all things." Christ broke every priestly yoke and bade men pray as he did, with no intermediate official, nothing between them and the Father of lights; making the whole earth a temple and each true breathing of the heart acceptable adoration. More than two centuries passed, before masters of doctrine arose who claimed to bind and loose on

earth and in heaven. These were the favored ones, in their own estimation, who knew expressly all about "the mind of the Lord." These were the "successors of the Apostles," who, as "the clergy," first made themselves "the Church," and ended by setting themselves above the reason and conscience of every individual soul.

## XX.

## ITS ESSENTIAL NOTES.

“THE essential *notes* of the Church by which it is made visible,” says one of the most distinguished Episcopal Bishops of the present day, “are the administration of the Sacraments in all things essential to them, and the preaching of the pure Word of God. Wherever these are, is the visibility of the Church. Wherever there is under them a community of God’s true people, there the true Church not only *is*, but is *visible*, as far as it can be to those who cannot search the heart. What are called the *notes* of the Church are often spoken of as if they were *constituent* elements of the Church. This language is correct precisely in the sense in which it is correct to speak of the *sacramental* receiving of the communion, as the *communion of the body of Christ*; or the *sacramental* receiving of baptism, as the baptism of the Holy Ghost; or that the man who has the *notes* of being a Christian, in having the profession of the fundamentals of the faith, joined with a reception of the Sacraments, is thereby a real Christian. He

has the *notes* or signs of a Christian, and therefore is called a Christian; but those notes or signs do not make him a true Christian, nor *prove* him to be such. They only prove that he has the divinely appointed *visibility* of a Christian. Thus as to the *notes* of the true Church. They do not belong to the *being* of the Church in the sight of God; but only to its being in the sight of man, that is, to its visibility, its form. That form may be supposed as all laid aside, and a new mode of *profession* put on under another dispensation; and yet the Church may continue essentially the same. Its notes or signs *indicate*, but do not *constitute* its being. They are *marks*, not *properties*. Thus the whole divinely-appointed visibility of the Church is the one sign of the Church, indicating, as the light upon the dwellings of the Israelites in Egypt, amidst the deep surrounding darkness, the *existence* in this dark world, of a Church which otherwise would be invisible; but it does no more. It is *not* the Church, any more than that miraculous light wherewith God marked off his people Israel, and made his Church visible in the night of Egypt, was that people."

The Church has no more right to dispense with the *visible* form under which God has appointed it to be in this world, than a man has a right to divest himself of the body which God

has given him to wear. But the question, what constitutes the Church? is as independent of what makes it the *visible* Church, as the question, What is the intelligent man? is independent of what makes the body of a man.

For ordinary purposes no harm may arise from confounding, in common speech, the *visibility* of the Church with the *being* of the Church, and speaking of the one, as if it were identical with the other. Thus we speak of man. The visible man, his body, is spoken of as *the man*. We say the man is dead, when we mean only that his body, the *visible form* or sign of the man, is dead. The man himself is living still, but *invisible*. But when the great question comes, What is it to be a Christian? to be of the communion of saints; in other words, what is it to be a member of the Holy Catholic Church, the Body of Christ? Then as we say of every individual person who has been baptized, and is a communicant, that he is *not* a Christian except he has received the inward baptism of the Holy Ghost and feeds upon Christ in his heart by faith; so we must say of all the baptized and the communicating, that while they have all the visibility of the Church, none of them have any part in its reality, *except* they be joined by a *living faith to Christ*.

## XXI.

## VIEWS OF DISTINGUISHED DIVINES.

IT is interesting and instructive to know that the views we have expressed in regard to the *one* true, spiritual, Catholic Church are fully in harmony with the sentiments of intelligent and eminent writers in every age of the Church.

PHILIP MELANCHTHON, in the "Apologia Augustani Confessionis," says "Ecclesia, non est tantum societas externarum rerum ac rituum, sicut aliæ politiæ. Sed *principaliter* est societas fidei et Spiritus Sancti in cordibus, quæ, tamen, habet externas notas, ut agnosci possit, videlicet puram Evangelii doctrinam, et administrationem sacramentorum consentaneam Evangelio Christi, et hæc Ecclesia sola dicitur Corpus Christi, quod Christus Spiritu suo renovat, sanctificat et gubernat, ut testatur Paul. Eph. i: cum ait; et ipsum dedit caput super omnia Ecclesiæ, quæ est Corpus ejus."

JOHN CALVIN says: "The universal Church is the whole multitude collected from all nations, who though in countries widely distant from

each other, nevertheless consent to the same truth of Divine doctrine and are united by the bond of the same religion." "Therefore the Church is called Catholic because there could not be two or three Churches without Christ being divided, which is impossible. But all the elect of God are so connected with each other in Christ, that as they depend upon one Head, so they grow up together like members of the same body, being made truly one, as living by one faith, hope, and charity, through the same divine Spirit, being called not only to the same inheritance of eternal life, but to a participation of one God and Christ."

ARCHBISHOP CRANMER says: "I believe the Holy Catholic Church; that is to say, that ever there is found some company of men or some congregation of good people which believe the Gospel and are saved. For this word, *Church*, signifieth a company of men lightened with the Spirit of Christ, which do receive the Gospel; and this Christian Church is a *communion of saints*, that is to say, all that be of this communion or company, be holy, and be one holy body under Christ their Head. And this congregation receiveth of their Head and Lord all spiritual riches and gifts that pertain to the sanctification and making holy of the same body."

BISHOP RIDLEY says: "That Church which is

Christ's Body, and of which Christ is the Head, standeth only of lively stones and true Christians, not only outwardly in name and title, but inwardly in heart and in truth."

BISHOP DAVENANT says: "The Catholic Church, which is called the Body of Christ, consists of such as are truly sanctified and united to Christ by an internal alliance, so that no wicked person or unbeliever is a member of this body solely by the external profession of faith and participation of the Sacraments."

JEREMY TAYLOR says: "If any will agree to call the universality of professors by the title of the Church, they may if they will. Any word by consent may signify anything. But if by a Church we mean that society which is really joined to Christ, which hath received the Holy Ghost, which is heir of the promises and of the good things of God, which is the body of which Christ is the Head, *then the invisible part of the visible Church, that is, the true servants of Christ only are the Church.*"

ARCHBISHOP LEIGHTON says: "The Holy Catholic Church—a number that serve God here and enjoy him in eternity. *Universal*, diffused through the various ages, places, and nations of the world. *Holy*, washed in the blood of Christ and sanctified by His Spirit."

ARCHBISHOP USHER says: "What is meant here (in the creed) by the Catholic Church?" "That whole universal company of the elect that ever were, are or shall be gathered together in one body, knit together in one faith, under one head, Jesus Christ. For God, in all places, and of all sorts of men, had from the beginning, hath now and ever will have, an holy Church, which is therefore called the Catholic Church—that is God's whole or universal assembly, because it comprehendeth the multitude of all those that have, do, or shall believe, unto the world's end. Part are already in heaven *triumphant*, part as yet *militant* here upon earth."

The names of many other eminent divines who lived before and since the Reformation, might be given, who have borne testimony, equally clear and unequivocal, in regard to the *essential* and *vital difference* between the nominal and real—the formal and living Church, but it is presumed the above are sufficient.

## XXII.

## THE ESSENCE DIVINE.

JUST here in connection with the point we have been presenting and which we deem of vital importance, we take pleasure in giving the following truthful sentiments from the gifted pen of Merle D'Aubigne: "Let us then attribute a divine institution and a divine authority to the *essence* of the Church, but by no means to its form. There is doubtless on the part of God, a minister of the Word; there are the Sacraments, that is to say, general forms which are for the universal Church; but to place the particular form to which each sect belongs, above the Christian element, is a narrow bigotry which infallibly brings death. This evil has long reigned in the Eastern Church and made her barren. It is the essence and destruction of the Church of Rome. It aims to introduce itself into all Churches. It shows itself in England in Anglicism; in Germany in Lutheranism; and it also shows itself in the Reformed and Presbyterian Church. It is that mystery of iniquity which had already shown itself in the

time of the Apostle. Let us reject, and let us combat this principle of death wherever it is found. We are men before we are Swiss or French, or English or Germans. Let us remember that we are *Christians* also *before* we are Anglicans or Lutherans, Reformers or Dissenters. These divers forms of Churches are as the divers costumes, the divers faces, and yet more, the divers characters of nations. The *essential* of the man is not in all these accessories. It is in the *heart* that beats beneath all this exterior; in the conscience seated there; in the intelligence abiding there; in the will formed there. If they put the *Church* above *Christianity*, *form* above *life*, they shall infallibly reap that which they have sown. They shall soon have a Church, an assembly of skeletons, brilliantly clothed, perhaps; ranged, I grant, in admirable order; but icy, motionless, and resembling a *pale legion of the dead*. All forms, papal, patriarchal, episcopal, consistorial or presbyterian, have no more than human value —human authority. Do not let us value the bark more than the sap, the body above the soul, *form* above *life*, the visible Church above the invisible, the priest above the Holy Spirit. Forms, ecclesiastical constitutions, and the organization of congregations, have their importance and even their *great* importance. “But seek ye *first* the

kingdom of God and His righteousness, and *all these things* shall be added unto us." These are noble words—words flowing from a large intellect and a sanctified heart, and they will commend themselves by their intrinsic worth to all Evangelical Christians.

## XXIII.

## PRIVATE JUDGMENT.

THE Church of Christ, in the true, Scriptural, Catholic sense in which we have represented it, is the uncompromising and devoted friend of this sacred right. The right of private judgment has been the subject of no little discussion in every age, almost, of the Church. The claim is put forth under the specious name of a Church principle, that the judgment of an individual must in all cases yield to that of the Church; that to the Church belongs the interpretation of Scripture; and that the individual Christian must go, not so much to the Word of God, as to the interpretation of the Church, to ascertain divine truth. There is no little vagueness and not unfrequent inconsistency in the language of those who claim to be the organs of the Church upon this point. But it would seem, if their meaning can be ascertained, that they require the individual Christian to take his faith primarily from the Church, and at the same time forbid him the trial of the interpretations of the Church by his own reading and

understanding of Scripture, to ascertain whether they are or are not consistent with the Word of God. That we may state the principle clearly and fairly, which is maintained on this subject, we will quote the following enunciation of it from what many will consider an unexceptionable source, Palmer on the Church. "We have," says this writer, "an unerring guide to the true meaning of Scripture in the doctrine of the universal Church in all ages, and in the formal and legitimate judgments made by that Church, in controversies of faith. To these, I maintain, that every private Christian is bound to submit his private opinion, as to unerring and irrefragable authority."

This subject is evidently one that is eminently important and practical, viz: the duty and the right of individual examination of the Divine Word, as the standard of final appeal for the ascertainment of doctrinal truth and personal obligation. The right is to be viewed as dependent upon and growing out of the duty. The great point involved is this: are we answerable to God for this exercise of our faculties and for the way wherein it has been performed? Is it a part of our moral accountability? If, with opportunity for examining for ourselves the Word of our Maker, we prefer to rest upon the teachings of a body of our fellow-men and take their

avement as to what that Word contains, and are thereby led into error and sin, shall we be held excusable and guiltless? Or, must we answer for it at the bar of judgment whether we have or have not embraced the truth; and whether in order to prepare ourselves for the great reckoning, we have searched the Scriptures with sincerity and prayer and humbleness of mind? Is it the will of God that we should rest upon His Word and upon His Spirit, or that we should depend upon the Church as our sufficient and unerring guides into all truth. The question for the Christian is not so much the challenge of a right as the humble and reverend ascertainment of a duty. He believes "the truth will make him free." How shall he be assured as to what is truth? With trembling solicitude, lest he make shipwreck of faith, he inquires in what way he shall determine a point of such unspeakable moment. He has the Bible in his hand. He is satisfied that it is a revelation from God. May he examine it, trusting in the promised guidance of the Holy Spirit, to show him what is "that good and acceptable and perfect will of God," or must he go to some other source to be directed and taught the true meaning of the Scriptures?

The first and principal difficulty that springs up in the way of those who deny the right of

private judgment and direct men to some other infallible judge of the meaning of Scripture, is the fact that it is impossible to find such an authorized and infallible judge. We do not find in the New Testament the record of the appointment of such an office. And we certainly must believe that if Christ were a law-giver of ordinary wisdom, he would have given a clear commission to an office of such vital importance in His Church. He has appointed a ministry for the perfecting of the saints and the edifying of His body, but we have yet to find the passage in which He clothes any man or men with infallibility or authority so that they must be implicitly followed. But who, save the Head of the body, has power to form such a tribunal in the Church? If He has not taken such action, it cannot be done except by usurpation, to which God forbid that we should ever submit.

From the total silence of Scripture on this subject has resulted a most singular and ludicrous spectacle. Those who believe in the existence of such authority may be seen in fierce debate on the question, where it is lodged. Yes, they who deny the right of private judgment, actually exercise that right with great vehemence in endeavors to ascertain to what authority it should be yielded up. Some contend that this authority

is in the Pope, some in a Council, some in Pope and Council together. Some contend that it is found in the Catholic traditions of the ancient Church. But you scatter their forces immediately by asking the simple question, what is the ancient Church? Did it extend through three, four, five centuries or more? Here a multitude of opinions is found at war with each other, some limiting the ancient Church to an earlier, some to a later date.

Even if all could agree on the precise time covered by this authoritative Church, the questions yet arise, whether her traditions may be depended upon and whether they are consistent with each other, or sometimes flatly contradictory? An appeal to authentic history would soon dispose of these questions and shake our confidence to the ground. Luther might have included the Christian Fathers, when he said in his defence at Worms, "I cannot submit my faith either to Popes or Councils, since it is clear as noon-day that they have often erred, and even opposed one another."

To settle all disputes and harmonize all parties a very comprehensive maxim has been adopted, viz: "Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus;" the meaning of which is, "That is to be believed, which has been believed always,

everywhere, and by all." "But alas," says a powerful writer, "on investigation it is found that nobody knows what everybody has said; that what has been affirmed everywhere is remembered nowhere." Indeed, how is it possible for a man to ascertain what has been taught "always, everywhere, and by all?" Must he consume a lifetime in searching folios, before he can with fear and trembling conclude that he at last knows what the Lord would have him to do? Oh no! is the answer, and here the tendency of the whole doctrine becomes manifest. Oh no! a priest regularly ordained and in the succession, is the depository of Catholic truth, and the representative of the Church. You must learn with faith and humility from his lips, remembering that Christ has said to His servants—"He that heareth you heareth me." Thus the Church is the mouth of Scripture, and the priest the mouth of the Church. Where then is the authority for which we have been seeking? Is it in the Pope, or Council, or Church, or Fathers, or Priest?

With great propriety has Henry Rogers remarked: "He who receives this doctrine in its integrity has nothing more to do than to eject his reason, sublime his faith into credulity, and reduce his creed into these two comprehensive articles: 'I believe what the Church believes;'

'I believe that the Church believes whatsoever my father-confessor believes that she believes.' For thus he reasons: Nothing is more certain that whatsoever God says is infallibly true; it is infallibly true that the Church says just what God says; it is infallibly true that what the Church says is known; and it is also infallibly true that my father-confessor or the parson of the next parish, is an infallible expositor of what is thus infallibly known to be the Church's infallible belief, of what God has declared to be infallibly true. If any one of the links, even the last, in this strange *sorites*, be supposed unsound—if it be not true that the priest is an infallible expounder to the individual of the Church's infallibility, if his judgment be only his 'private judgment,' we come back at once to the perplexities of the common theory of private judgment; and the question then submitted to the individual Romanist's 'private judgment' is, whether it be reasonable in him, in a matter of which he knows nothing, but which is yet of infinite moment, to surrender *his* private judgment to that of another man. And truly to decide a question without having any data for deciding it, appears to us quite as difficult a problem as any of those which are ordinarily submitted to 'private judgment.' The system, therefore, must be received in its

integrity; and if so, the rule of conduct is very simple. If the priest tells us that bread is flesh, and wine is blood—that the sun revolves around the earth—that Gulliver's travels, if they had not been written by a heretic, *would* have been true as the Gospel—all we have to do is to believe it, and, if need be, to believe it even for Tertullian's paradoxical reason, '*because* it is impossible.'"

Of every other mode of nullifying or circumscribing the right of judgment, and of this too, except where the claim of infallibility is not merely *made* but *admitted*, it may be shown that it is either nugatory, or flagitious, or both. Conscious of this, there is a small party of *hybrid Protestants* amongst us, who virtually claim for some Church unknown, neither the Church of Rome, nor the Church of England, and yet both, but certainly *not* the Church of Scotland; some "visible Church" which is not to be seen; some "Catholic Church" which excludes all Christians except Episcopalian; some "undivided Church," which embraces the communions of the reciprocally excommunicated; some "Primitive Church" of uncertain date—nothing less than the infallibility, and consequent authority, of the Church of Rome. But they are "born out of due time;" their infallibility comes too late to enable them,

by its means, to limit the “right of private judgment,” or relieve us of our perplexities. For unhappily the Church of Rome has got the start of them; there are, therefore, *rival* claims to infallibility; and, consequently, if more could be said to reconcile the manifold contradictions of the theory of these men, and to authenticate their claims to be its expositors, than ever *can* be said, “Private Judgment” would still be pressed with the most transcendantly perplexing question ever submitted to the arbitration of ignorance—“Of two claimants to infallibility, which is the more likely to be infallible?”

The right of private judgment does not by any means do away with the necessity nor deprecate the value of the ministry of the Word. It does not result in the want of proper respect for the true ministerial character. The man who says, why should Churches be opened and ministers preach if every man be at liberty to form his own opinions, betrays gross ignorance of the ends for which the ministry of reconciliation has been instituted. If we had nothing more in view than the honor of the ministry, we would ardently desire not only that all men might possess this right, but also that they would earnestly and conscientiously exercise it. It is fatal to *priestcraft*, but not in the least injurious to the

legitimate exercise of the power of the Christian ministry.

*A priest* may well tremble when he sees an open Bible in the hands of a parishioner, but the minister who loves the souls of men will rejoice at the sight. *A priest* whose aim is power and self-aggrandizement, and who therefore represents himself as a depository of great gifts, of absolution, sacramental grace, covenanted mercies, may well contend that the people should submissively receive the law at his mouth; but the minister who is anxious that men should increase in knowledge, will be glad to see them embracing every means of attaining it, and thereby becoming skillful in separating truth from error. The great tendency of the restriction of the use of the Bible, and of encroachment on the absoluteness and supremacy of its authority, is to augment the power of the clergy and place the consciences of men under their control. Whenever this has been effected the people have become slaves, the victims of a most cruel and terrible despotism. At the time of the Reformation, the right of private judgment was asserted in thunder tones, and the authority of Priestcraft was broken, and the Bible, long hidden from the eyes of the people, was restored, and read and studied, and new life and energy were diffused through the

masses, and the evangelical churches, which are the light-houses of the world, were ushered into being, and a new and purer and brighter type of civilization began everywhere to prevail.

“Christianity,” as one has beautifully remarked, “leaves the mind of the individual, as well as the civilization of the masses to its own free course of development, sure that the divine principles of *purity* and *love* it implants will suffice to moderate and guide it, so that excesses of all kinds and differences repugnant to its spirit, of every degree, will be either restrained or averted. Independent of every thing earthly, temporal, or transient; independent of nature, which is merely the domain on which it toils and on which its progress is accomplished; and independent of mankind, which is its pupil and beneficiary, Christianity is divine, and therefore cannot be destroyed. It is, under God, the soul and substance of perfect freedom; and, therefore, is too mighty for sectarian chains, and too capacious for exclusive creeds. It is a beneficent and all-blessing spirit, like the Sun shining on the imbecile and blind. It gently permeates the arteries and veins of the whole social system, softening manners, calming hatred, enlarging sympathy, expanding benevolence, and every way exalting and ennobling the soul.

## XXIV.

## THE RULE OF ITS FAITH.

HE who is King and Head of the Church has revealed a system of doctrine, and inspired holy men of old, to commit the same to writing for the future instruction and guidance of his Church. The Word of God, which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, is the *only* rule to the Church of what doctrine it is to believe and teach; for all *Scripture* is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine. Therefore the command is, preach the *Word*. To all *true Protestants* the Scriptures are invested with *supreme authority*. Before the canon of the New Testament was finished, and whilst Apostles having plenary inspiration yet guided the Church, their teachings *orally* had with the Christian disciples the authority *now due* to their *written* testimony. Their writings gathered and fixed revelation and gave it a local habitation in the Bible. Just as philosophers tell us, as the light existed before the creation of the sun, floating in irregular masses, so was it with revelation in the

first century. *Until* Apostles, by their writings, compiled and by their death closed the canon of the New Testament, *this*, the light of heaven for the human soul, was floating in the oral instructions of the teachers and in the memories of their converts. The formation of the New Testament and the departure of inspired Apostles, gathered and fixed and limited Divine Revelation, in an embodiment *from* which now nothing may be taken and *to* which nothing may be added. Whatever this book, the Bible, repudiates, is heresy. Whatever it rebukes, is sin. Whatever it is silent on, is *not* necessary to our salvation.

The votaries of tradition represent the Bible as incomplete, needing their traditions as its appendix and its exposition. But the attempt to make tradition an indispensable supplement to Scripture, and to prove that revelation is to be compiled and a system of religious truth selected, out of the Fathers, Councils, and Decretals, it seems to us, is, on its own face, as absurd as would be the proposal that we should set ourselves to compile and complete the "Paradise Lost" of Milton, a book of the seventeenth century, out of the newspapers and general literature of the nineteenth century. We might better content ourselves with the copy as it stands in its *original integrity*. If we are to go out of it, we

may find in the floating sheets of our time, all the words of Milton's poem, covered by myriads of other words, and destitute of all order and cohesion. But the task of disentangling, identifying and arranging these "scattered members" of the poet, would involve a toil quite as difficult for our incompetency as the writing of a new and rival *Paradise Lost*. And so in the traditions of the Church and the teachings of the Fathers, tortuous and contradictory and confused as they are, inspiration and omniscience would be quite as much needed to disentangle truth from error, as to write any gospel or epistle in all the New Testament. The inspired selection of the true tradition would need, too, as much miraculous evidence to warrant the claim, as was vouchsafed to the inspired dictation of the canonical scriptures.

But it is said by the advocates of Patristic lore: You do not know the canonical scriptures, except by the testimony of the early fathers, and if they gave you the testament, you are bound to take with it their interpretation. We do not admit this. The early Christians are but as the postman who brings to us a letter from some friend, the resident of a distant city. The epistle is authenticated, in part, indeed, by the post-mark and the carrier. But besides and above the evidence thus supplied, the *letter itself* and its contents, as

tallying with the known character and earlier correspondence of our distant friend, are evidences also; and if these last be wanting the others would be unavailing. In his place the carrier does good service and bears availing testimony; but if *because* he is the postman, he claims to open for us, and to interpret to us, the epistle he brings, he grossly exaggerates his own prerogatives.

Even so it is with the early Churches. As the bearers, in Divine Providence, to us of our Father's letters missive, they may legitimately testify to certain facts within their knowledge, that certain compositions were written by Apostles and apostolic men whom the Apostles explicitly authorized thereto. This is a fact of history. They are the masters of the post where the letter was mailed, and their mark fixes its origin at such place and at such date. But there are other historical witnesses besides them. The very opponents of the gospel, in earlier ages, give similar testimony. Julian, the apostate, is himself, then, *one of the postmen*. But even traditionists themselves would not contend that he is, therefore, an interpreter of the documents, which he aids in authenticating and forwarding.

“The testimony and consent of the universal Church,” says Gausseen, “to the divine authority

of the scriptures, is indeed important. But we are to beware of the notion that the authority of the scriptures is founded upon that of the Church. The Church acts as a witness and as a servant, not as a mistress; a depository, not a judge. She exercises an office, not an authority. She gives her testimony, not her sentence. She *discerns* the canon of scripture, she has not made it. She has recognized its authenticity, she has not constituted it. And as the men of Shechem believed in Jesus Christ not from the report of the sinful but penitent woman who called them to him so we say to the Church—now we believe, not because of thy saying; we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world. We have believed, then, *per eam*, and not *propter eam*, by *means* of her, and not *because* of her. We found her on her knees, and she showed us her master. We have recognized Him, and we have ourselves knelt with her. If I mingle in the last ranks of an imperial army; if I request them to point out to me their Prince, to conduct me to him, they will do in respect to him for me what the Church does for the Scriptures. They will not say that their Prince has authority by their testimony alone, whether as it regards themselves or us. The authority of the Scriptures is in no way founded on the authority

of the Church. It is the Church which is founded on the authority of the Scriptures."

Our principle then is—the principle of all Protestants—that the *Scriptures alone* form the rule of faith; and that whatever is not contained there, we are not only not bound to receive, but, if presented in the form of an article of religion, bound to reject. We thankfully receive light, in explaining the *Scriptures*, from whatever quarter it may come, whether it be derived from tradition, or from the universal practice and opinion of the primitive Church; but our *faith* must rest not on the opinions or practices of fallible men, but on the *infallible* oracles of God in His written word. To build upon tradition would be to build on the mass of accumulated errors and superstitions of many generations. If, even in the purest ages, those nearest the days of the **Apostles**, great uncertainty attended the things received by tradition, what confidence can be placed in it after it has been flowing in a channel, often very impure, during seventeen hundred years? Is it not a fact, attested by history, that as early as the second century, rites were adopted into the worship of the Christian Church on the ground of expediency, with a view of recommending christianity to the heathen? Apart from the *Scriptures*, how can we distinguish what

was adopted on this principle, from that which was handed down from apostolic tradition?

Archbishop Usher, at the close of his very powerful array of the reasons which prove that God is the Author of the Holy Scriptures, puts the question, *Are these motives of themselves sufficient to work saving faith and persuade us fully to rest in God's word?* And answers, No. "Besides all these it is required that we have the Spirit of God, as well to open our eyes to see the light, as to *seal* up fully unto our *hearts* that truth which we see with our eyes. For the same Holy Spirit that inspired the Scriptures, inclineth the hearts of God's children to believe what is revealed in them, and inwardly *assureth* them *above all reasons* and *arguments*, that these are the Scriptures of God. Therefore the Lord by the Prophet Isaiah promiseth to join His Spirit with His Word, and that it shall remain with His children forever. And so in other promises. This testimony of God's Spirit in the hearts of His faithful, as it is peculiar to the Word of God, so it is *greater* than any human persuasions, grounded upon *reason* or *witnesses* of men, unto which it is unmeet that the Word of God should be subject, as Papists hold, when they teach that the Scriptures receive their authority *from the Church*. For by thus hanging the credit and authority of

the Scriptures on the Church's sentence, they make the Church's word of greater credit than the Word of God; whereas the Scriptures of God cannot be judged or sentenced by any. God only is a worthy witness of Himself in His Word and by His Spirit, which give mutual testimony, one of the other; and works that assurance of faith in His children that no human demonstration can make, nor any persuasions or enforcements of the world can remove."

This is a noble passage. The Spirit that gave birth to the Word is the only competent agency to illuminate it and make it clear to the understandings and hearts of men. This is the key that unlocks all the mysteries of the Bible so far as is needed for the salvation of the soul. We, of course, admit that the testimony of the Church of God concerning the Word of God, and not concerning herself, is great, is mighty. It is the testimony of the Word and Spirit of God, in and through the Church, by its participation in the divine nature, its manifestation of the divine holiness. But *then* if it were all annihilated, the Word of God, in its simple majesty, would have just as much power to all to whom it speaks, falling like a cataract into the depths of the soul. A man who has never heard of the *Falls of Niagara*, would be just as much overwhelmed

by it, if he came upon it in the wilderness, as if he had heard the voice of nations testifying to its sublimity. Just so it is with the Scriptures. Their *external* testimony, as quaint Mr. Berridge used to say of learning, is a good stone to throw at a dog to stop his barking. It is good to meet the objections of infidels; good to show that no counterproof can be brought against your argument; good also for the mind to fall back upon in times when the spiritual vision is dark, the soul clouded, and only the earthly understanding wakeful. But, after all, if the Word of God is living, abiding, speaking, whenever and however it comes, it comes with *Divine authority*, and needs no attendant to usher it in, no herald to demonstrate its dignity.

It is a painful sight, indeed, to witness one party in religion making the Church a mediator between God's Word and the soul. Instead of Christ's words, "I am the vine, ye are the branches; abide in me, and let my words abide in you;" *their* language is, "The Church is the vine; abide in the Church, and let the words and ordinances of the Church abide in you." This produces a religion of dependence on the Church. It is obedience to ceremony and tradition; the sacrifice of personal independence, not for the sake of principle, but form. It is humility for the sake of pride; humil-

ity not in the shape of gentleness and love to those *beneath* us, but of the worship of power, authority and grandeur *above* us. This is the humility which the forms of a monarchy tend to generate; humility upwards, not downwards; the minding of high things, not the condescending to men of low estate. This is the humility of Popery and Puseyism. It is humility to all above, but *pride* and *arrogance* to all beneath. It is self-worship disguised. It is *arrogance* and *pride* indulged and erected into a *virtue*. This is one of the *greatest triumphs of error and sin, when it can be enshrined into a form of duty.*

## XXV.

## ITS MINISTRY NOT A PRIESTHOOD.

HAVING examined briefly the *nature of the true Church of Christ* and the *Rule of Faith* by which it is to be governed, we will next consider the question, *Is the Christian ministry a proper priesthood?*

The advocates of hierarchical claims, whether in the Romish, Greek, or Protestant Churches, assume that Christian ministers are entitled to be regarded as succeeding to the same relation to the Church, with that which was sustained by the priesthood under the Jewish economy. Hence the terms and offices peculiar to the ancient priests are conceived to be analogous to the functions and designations of the Christian ministry. On this assumption it is contended that the duties performed and the authority exercised, under the direct sanction of the Most High, are now transferred to those who are duly qualified by a certain order of succession, to discharge the offices of the ministry, under the present dispensation.

The teaching of the New Testament upon this

point is as follows. The whole of the ceremonial law was of a typical character, and prefigured the work and offices of the Saviour who was to come. The legal sacrifices pointed to the one great sacrifice to be offered up upon the cross. The Levitical priesthood was a type of the heavenly priesthood of Christ. He it is, the object both of type and prophecy, who is the true priest and mediator between God and man. Through *him* all christians have direct and immediate access to God. As we *need* not, so we *have* not, any other priest, any other advocate with the Father. For the antetype being come, the type necessarily ceases. The reality supersedes the figure. Truth as well as grace came by Jesus Christ. Thence is enjoyed that true fellowship of the Christian with the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of which the whole national ritual of the Jew was but a symbolical adumbration.

Such is the testimony of Scripture, and especially of that portion of it—the Epistle to the Hebrews—which is specially designed to instruct us in the relation which the Aaronic priesthood bore to that of Christ. This inspired commentary upon the Levitical law, not only declares that a human priesthood does not exist under the gospel, but explains why such an institution is no longer necessary, viz: that Christ himself, in His

priestly office, is a real and all-sufficient mediator between God and man. The exercise of Christ's priestly office dates not from the beginning, but from that time when "being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of bulls and goats, but by his own blood, he entered in once unto the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." By which great events a new order of things was introduced, superseding and rendering unnecessary the ancient priesthood and every institution of a similar nature. "For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also in the law; and that the ancient priesthood is abrogated is "evident, for that after the similitude of Melchisidec, there ariseth another," *not priesthood*, but "*priest*," who is made not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. "As every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices, it is of necessity that this man have somewhat to offer;" and the offering which He presented was His *body* once for all, "by one offering," perfecting "forever them that are sanctified." The *perfection* of this sacrifice forbids the supposition that it is *ever* to be repeated. If the Levitical sacrifices were "offered year by

year," it was because they could not make the comers thereunto perfect;" could not "purge" their "conscience from dead works to serve the living God." Could they have done so, "would they not have ceased to be offered?" "Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entered into the holy place with blood of others; for then must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world; but now once in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." "Now where the remission of these (sins) is, there is no more offering for sin;" and, therefore, no longer occasion for *sacrificing priests*.

Thus it will be perceived that Christ Himself, not a Christian priesthood, is the true key to the Levitical Ritual, which, when regarded as symbolical of His offices and work, acquires a dignity which does not otherwise belong to it. It is when viewed as prefigurative of the Redeemer's offices, as "the place where the Lord lay," under the veil of the ancient covenant that the symbolical ordinances of the law are rescued from their inherent insignificance. In the light of the gospel they shine with a reflected light, and the luminary

that sheds a lustre upon them is not a new sacerdotal system adapted to Christianity, but the Sun of Righteousness Himself, the sole Priest of His Church, the fulfilment both of type and prophecy.

In Scripture various terms are used to describe the office of Christian ministers. They are called pastors, rulers, teachers, ministers, evangelists; but not even once is the term "Hiereus," "Sacrificing priest," applied to them, or is the eucharist spoken of as a *sacrifice*. The Apostles do indeed transfer the terms of the Jewish law to the Gospel, but it is in such a way as to exhibit in the most striking manner the modification of meaning which we must then attach to them. Instead of describing Himself and His colleagues as priests, or applying the term at all to Christian ministers, St. Peter declares all Christians to be "a royal priesthood." All Christians are priests, not in the figurative sense in which the Jewish Nation was, on account of its peculiar relation to Jehovah, described as "a kingdom of priests," but in the strict and proper sense of the word, because the way into the holiest being now made open, *all* have *immediate* access to God through Christ, without the intervention of any human mediator. As every priest must "have somewhat to offer," Christians have their sacrifices, which, however, are but the spiritual sacrifices, either of praise

and thanksgiving, the fruit of the lips giving thanks to His name; or of themselves upon the altar of self-denial and love.

“The pious Jew, in what part soever of the world he might be, regarded the temple with its priesthood, sacrifices and ritual, as the centre of national unity. With it his most hallowed associations were connected, and thither, as we learn from the occurrences of the day of Pentecost, he was accustomed to repair from the remotest parts of the Roman Empire, to celebrate, with his brethren, the solemn feasts enjoined by the law. Now the Jewish temple, as every reader of the New Testament knows, has in Christianity no material counterpart. It is the Church, the mystical body of Christ, composed of those who are in living union with Him, that is now the abode of God’s covenanted presence. Each true Christian is the temple of the Holy Ghost, or rather a living stone in the ‘spiritual house,’ resting upon ‘Jesus Christ, the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord.’ Hence, there being in Christianity no material temple, the visible centre of unity to the local societies, which constitute collectively the visible Church, there are no visible temple services, priesthood, or sacrifice. Whatever there is in the Christian

Church of a sacerdotal character is of the same nature with the Christian temple itself, that is, it is spiritual and invisible. Christ, the *only* priest of the new temple, is in heaven, not upon earth; and the only sacrifices now offered by the Christian are the spiritual ones to which allusion has already been made, which are acceptable to God through the mediation of Christ."

The name Priest, therefore, should never be applied to the Minister of the Gospel. To Jesus Christ and Him alone, under the New Testament dispensation, should the name be given, as it is in fact uniformly, except in the sense in which it is given to all true Christians. In the Roman Catholic Communion it is *consistent* to give the name Priest to a Minister of the Gospel, but at the same time it is *wrong* to do it. It is *consistent* because that Church claims that a true *sacrifice* of the body and blood of Christ is offered in the mass. It is *wrong* because that doctrine is wholly contrary to the New Testament, and is derogatory to the one perfect oblation which has been once made for the sins of the world; and is at the same time conferring on a class of men a degree of importance and of power to which they have no claim and which is so liable to abuse. But in a Protestant Church it is *neither* consistent *nor* right to give the name to a minister of religion.

The only sense in which the term can now be used, is a sense in which it is applicable to all Christians alike, that they "offer the sacrifice of prayer and praise."

To arrest a returning sinner by interposing a priest as a necessary or needed medium of favorable communication, without whose intervention pardon cannot ordinarily be had, is an absurd and mischievous perversion of the ministerial office. It is as absurd as if a sign-board were used to *barricade* the path, instead of standing by the wayside and rightly directing the inquisitive traveler. And it is as mischievous as it is absurd, for it robs Christ of His glory, ruins the souls of men, and inflates an aspiring, self-aggrandizing priesthood. The history of Christianity is a vast repository of evidence to the deep, manifold, and destructive evils into which this anti-evangelical dogma has plunged the Church.

## XXVI.

## THE SACRAMENTS.

To the Christian ministry appertain various functions. Besides those of preaching the Word, exercising discipline, and generally caring for the souls committed to its charge, is that of administering the Sacraments of the Church. It has long been the custom in the Church to call Baptism and the Lord's Supper, *Sacraments*. Little light, however, can be derived from the use of this term, because it is not a Scriptural word, and because it is employed by ancient writers in a very comprehensive sense. As it comes from the word meaning to *consecrate*, anything sacred was called a sacrament. The Romans applied the term to a sum of money deposited in the hands of a High Priest to abide the decision of a suit. They also called the oath by which soldiers consecrated themselves to the military service a sacrament; and in the Latin Church (whence we have borrowed the word) it was used as synonymous with mystery, not only as applied to things which had a hidden meaning, but in its wider

sense, as signifying what was undiscoverable by human reason. In this sense the Gospel itself, the calling of the Gentiles, the future conversion of the Jews, are Sacraments. It is not from a word of such latitude of meaning that the nature of the Christian ordinances can be learned; but on the contrary, the Christian sense of the word must be determined from what the Scriptures teach concerning the ordinances to which the word is now applied.

There are but two Sacraments that have been instituted by Christ under the New Testament dispensation. These are *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper*. To these the Papists have added five more, though without any divine warrant. One of the sacraments which they have added is what they call *holy orders*; whereby they authorize persons to perform the office of priests or deacons. This they do by the imposition of hands, and at the same time pretend to confer the Holy Ghost. The former they suppose to be the sign, the latter the thing signified. But evidently this was not designed to be a *Sacrament* given to the Church; for the Sacraments are ordinances that belong to *all* believers and not to ministers only.

Another Sacrament added by the Papists is that of *Confirmation*; by which they pretend that children who in baptism were made members of

Christ, are strengthened and confirmed in the faith and thereby receive the Holy Ghost in order to their performing their baptismal vow. But whatever obligations they are laid under by means of baptism, it is God alone that can confirm or strengthen. This grace it is not in the power of man to bestow, nor can it be conferred by any ordinance. If it had been necessary, *Christ* would have *instituted* it, *which He did not*.

Another Sacrament they recognize, is that of *penance*; in which, after auricular confession made to the priest, and some external marks of sorrow expressed by the penitent, he is to perform some difficult service enjoined, which they call *penance*; whereby the penitent makes satisfaction for his sins and is thereby absolved from them. We say, in a word, that this is an abominable practice. Instead of delivering persons from their sin, it only hardens them in it. It is also derogatory to Christ's satisfaction, and has not the least appearance of a sacrament or ordinance of God's appointment.

Another Sacrament they have added is *extreme unction*; taken from James 5: 14, 15, where the Apostle speaks of sick persons being anointed with oil in the name of the Lord; and it is said the prayer of faith shall save the sick and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he has committed

sins they shall be forgiven him. To this it may be replied that though this practice of anointing the sick with oil was observed in the first age of the Church, while the miraculous gift of healing was continued, yet it has now ceased, and therefore no such sign is now to be used. Besides, if it is for the healing of the sick it is strange that the Papal Church anoints the sick for a quite different purpose; for it does not use it till it supposes the sick person very nearly, if not quite past recovery. The whole thing, as performed by the priests, is a mere farce—a mere piece of superstition. And it is quite preposterous to count this among the Sacraments under the Gospel dispensation.

Another Sacrament that the Papists add, is that of *Matrimony*. The only reason for considering this a sacrament is because they suppose that the Apostle calls it a great mystery, by which word the Greek Church used to signify a Sacrament. But the Apostle did not intend by this language that marriage is a mystery, but the union between Christ and His Church, which is illustrated by the marriage union. Indeed it may be remarked that marriage is not an ordinance given to the Church, but to mankind in general, heathen as well as Christians. Besides, if marriage is a Sacrament, the priests are excluded from it, as they

are forbidden to marry. Great folly and presumption are thus exhibited in attempting to add to the divinely-appointed Sacraments of the New Testament.

*Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper* are both rites of divine appointment and not of human institution; and they are also, according to the Bible, signs of spiritual blessings. They are designed, by outward, significant actions, to represent inward, spiritual gifts. We should greatly err, however, if we supposed they were merely signs. We are taught that they are seals; that they were appointed by Christ to certify to *believers* their interest in the blessings of the Covenant of Grace. It is not their design in the first instance to communicate spiritual life, but to be signs and seals of it, when by other instruments called into being, —to preserve, nourish, and perfect it, when already in existence. According to the terms of the original institution, neither of these ordinances was to be administered save to those concerning whom the presumption might be cherished that they had living faith in Christ and were partakers of His Spirit. “He that *believeth* and is baptized, shall be saved.” This is the divinely established relation between the new life and its visible sign; which, it is needless to say, belongs equally to the other sacrament. In after ages of the Church

it took upon itself to dispense with the internal preparation of the heart, teaching that the Sacraments are effectual, *ex opere operato*, and impress a spiritual character, *sine bono motu intentis*, or irrespectively of the moral state of the recipient; but this was done without the warrant, nay contrary to the plainest declarations of Scripture. Had this been the intended place of the Sacraments in the order of salvation, Christ would have instituted them at the threshold of His ministry. But He did not do so. First He attached, by the secret operation of His grace, the twelve to His person; He walked with them, taught them, instituted a living communion between them and Himself, and gave them faith to perceive that He was the Son of God; and then, when by His personal intercourse and instructions, He had brought them to some ripeness of religious knowledge, He delivered to them the pledge and seal of their fellowship with Him and with each other. The *place* which the institution of the Sacraments occupies in our Lord's ministry is quite in accordance with the doctrinal *statements* of Scripture respecting their mode of operations; the sum of which statements is, that the *word* received in faith must prepare the way for the right reception of the ordinances.

According to the Scriptures, Baptism is called

the Washing of Regeneration; it is said to unite us to Christ; to make us partakers of His death and life; to wash away our sins; to save the soul. The bread and wine in the Lord's Supper are said to be the body and blood of Christ; to partake of these emblems is said to secure our union with Christ, and a participation of the merits of His death. These, and similar passages, must be understood either with or without limitation. If they are to be limited, the limitation must not be arbitrarily imposed, but supplied by the Scriptures themselves. We have no right to say that the sacraments confer these benefits in every case in which no moral impediment is interposed, because no such limitation is expressed in the passages themselves, nor elsewhere taught in the Scriptures. The limitation which the Scriptures *do* impose on these passages is the *necessity of faith*. They teach that the sacraments are thus efficacious, *not* to every recipient, but to the believer; to those who have *already* the *grace* which these ordinances represent.

That the Scriptures teach that the passages in question are to be understood with the qualification just stated is clear, because otherwise they would teach that *every one* who is baptised is a child of God—renewed by the Holy Spirit—united to Christ—and made a partaker of the

saving benefits of his death. But this cannot be true. *First.* Because the Bible abundantly teaches that those who are renewed and receive the Holy Spirit, have the fruits of the Spirit; love, gentleness, goodness and faith. Where these fruits do not uniformly, nor even generally, attend the reception of the outward ordinances, it is evident that such persons are not renewed and do not partake of the Spirit.

In the *second* place, this interpretation is opposed to what the Scriptures elsewhere teach of the nature of sacraments. The opinion that such ordinances uniformly convey grace and introduce the recipient into favor with God, was one of those false doctrines of the Jews which Paul so earnestly combated. Great is the virtue of circumcision, for no circumcised person enters hell, was the confident and destructive persuasion of the formalists of that age. In opposition to this doctrine the Apostle assured them that circumcision would indeed profit them if they kept the law; but if they broke the law, their circumcision became uncircumcision. For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter. We have here a very explicit statement of the nature

and efficacy of a sacrament. It has no efficacy in itself considered. Its value depends on the presence or performance of the condition of the covenant to which it is attached. It was, therefore, not *external* circumcision that made a man a Jew, but the circumcision of the heart, of which the external rite was the sign. In like manner it is not *external* baptism that makes a man a Christian, but the baptism of the Spirit, of which the washing of water is the appointed symbol. The two are not necessarily connected, and where the latter is wanting, the former can be of no avail.

In the *third* place, that the sacraments are not designed to convey grace to those who have it not is plain, because the Scriptures require those who are admitted to these ordinances to make a profession of their faith and repentance. When the Apostles began to preach, we are told that those that gladly *received the word* were baptised. When the Eunuch desired to be baptised, Philip said to him, if thou *believest with all thy heart*, thou mayest. Cornelius did not receive the Holy Spirit, in the first instance, by baptism; but when Peter had evidence that he had already received the Spirit, he asked, can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptised which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? Paul was a penitent believer before his baptism. And

thus in all other cases where men were baptised, they professed to be Christians.

That the sacraments are means of grace will not be questioned by any one who seriously and intelligently receives them. How and under what circumstances they *become* such means, is an inquiry which has been variously answered. Some have supposed that by the consecrating act of the *priest*, so called, they receive and possess an energy, by which they *impart* the grace signified; operating, when endowed with this marvellous power, after the manner of spiritual causes. Others have held that they become, by such consecrating act, *channels* in which the signified grace is contained, and *through* which that grace is conveyed to the recipient. On both these theories, the efficacy of the sacraments depends not on the right dispositions of the recipient, but on the mysterious power, which resides *in* or is conveyed *through* the sacraments themselves. All that is indispensable to their effect is, that the recipient oppose no bar to their operation; in other words, that he be not living in positive unbelief, or in any deadly sin. The sacraments themselves, by the act of consecration, are supposed to become instinct with mysterious activity, and to operate as a kind of mystic marvel or power, a kind of supernatural source or channel of grace to the

soul. The result of which is—*to make the manhood of Christ incarnate or incorporate, in the whole human nature of His members.* This effect is supposed to flow, not from the *material* substance itself of the sacramental elements, but from the manhood or person of Christ, which by the act of consecration becomes the *essence* of the sacraments.

We find in the Bible nothing to authorize such views of the nature and effect of the sacraments. But we do find, as we have already shown, that both the faith and the repentance of the recipient were required in order to baptism; and we also find that some of the early Christians were severely censured for conduct, in regard to the Lord's Supper, which implied that they were strangers to the dispositions proper to its right reception. They, who had not faith or spiritual perception to "discern the Lord's body," or to perceive the difference between a common meal and that religious feast which symbolized the body of Christ, "ate and drank damnation to themselves."

As to the alleged effect of the sacraments in making the manhood of Christ, (as Archdeacon Wilberforce has taught in his work on the Incarnation and Eucharist) incarnate or incorporate in the whole human nature of His members; we are confident that the Bible, interpreted on sound

principles, teaches no such doctrine. That there is a *union* between Christ and his members is a plain and precious truth of inspiration. His indwelling in them is taught in express terms; and its intimacy and importance are illustrated by striking and beautiful imagery, such as that of the vine and its branches; the corner stone and the temple which it supports; the Head and the body which it informs. But in this union Christ is expressly said to "dwell in our hearts by faith," not incarnation or incorporation. Intimate and vital as it is, this union is spiritual in its nature, being formed and strengthened by the exercise of a lively faith. It is most appropriately symbolized in the Lord's Supper, which while it is a commemoration of the death of Christ and a sign and seal of the blessings thereby purchased, is also a representation of our union with Him; and where faith is exercised, it is that union in *real* and *active* existence. But to suppose that this union, because *real*, amounts to an incarnation or incorporation of the manhood of Christ in the whole human nature of his members, is to mystify, sensualize, and degrade the relation. This union no more involves the incarnation of Christ in his members, than the union of believers with one another involves their mutual incarnation. In both cases

the union is real and spiritual; and of *both*, the Lord's Supper is a simple and most significant visible representation. The doctrine of the continual incarnation of Christ in His members, involves the essence of the absurd dogma of the transubstantiation of the elements in the Sacrament.

Indeed we object to the Archdeacon's doctrine mainly on this ground, that it deprives us of what appears to us the most satisfactory argument we can use against the dogma of Transubstantiation —that dogma which is the fruitful source of so many errors in the Church of Rome. The argument which appears to us so trenchant, is this: If Christ's body was in all respects, except sin, of the *same constitution with ours*, it could not have been in any way *literally* given to the disciples and eaten by them, at the Last Supper, while our Lord was yet living and breathing. His blood could not have been drunk by them, while it was yet flowing in His veins. If there was no literal eating and drinking of Christ's body and blood on *that* occasion, not even a Romish Priest will contend that there is on *any other*. For the first Eucharist was the greatest of all; and the minister on that occasion was the "High Priest of our profession." If there was no change of the substance *then*, there is none *now*,

when the Eucharist is administered by ordinary men. *But* if our Lord's body was of "a peculiar constitution by nature," different from ours, this argument is deprived of its edge and force. We can no longer use it to cut down the Romish dogma at a *single* blow. Of course, by arguments familiar to all Protestant Theologians, we can still triumphantly refute that monstrous error, but we owe no thanks to the *peculiar* people who advocate the doctrine of a "peculiar constitution."

The Quarterly Review has truly and eloquently said that "The theory of Sacramental salvation which gradually developed itself, was neither more nor less than magic applied to religion. It powerfully aided, and was powerfully aided by, the transformation of the Christian ministry into a *Priesthood*. As the Sacraments, instead of emblems of truth, were regarded as channels of grace, so the Ministers of the Gospel, instead of teachers of Christ's Word, claimed to be dispensers of salvation. The elements changed by the spell of the Priest into the veritable body and blood of Christ, were the direct means, when received by the faithful, of uniting them corporeally to Christ, and transfusing through their *bodies*; and by *that* means through their souls, the saving virtues of His passion.

"Take away the flesh and blood of Christ from

the altar, and where is the sacrifice ? Take away the sacrifice and where is the priest ? Take away the priesthood, and allow the sinner to draw near to God for himself, without any human mediator, and at once the Church's power to forgive sins, to ensure or deny salvation, to grant indulgences, to deliver from purgatory—in a word, the whole Popish theory of the Church falls to the ground ; and the dominion of Rome over men's minds and consciences stands revealed for what it is, a vast conspiracy against the liberty, the rights, and the progress of the human race, based on the most colossal and audacious fraud."

One great advantage that may be claimed in behalf of what we may designate the *Sacramental* theory of the Church, in contradistinction to the *Evangelical*, is to be found in its adaptation to the human heart. Most men who live where the Gospel is known, desire some better foundation for confidence towards God than their own good works. To such men the Church, according to this theory, presents itself as an institution of salvation, venerable for its antiquity, attractive from the number and rank of its disciples, and especially from the easy terms on which it proffers pardon and eternal life. There are three very comprehensive classes of men to whom this system must commend itself.

The *first* consists of those who are at once ignorant and wicked. The degraded inhabitants of Italy and Portugal, have no doubt of their salvation, no matter how wicked they may be, so long as they are in the Church and submissive to officers and rites. The most murderous brigands that infest Italy at the present time, are said to carry on their persons the greatest number of crosses.

The *second* class includes those who are devout and at the same time ignorant of the Scriptures. Such men feel the need of religion, of communion with God, and of preparation for heaven; but knowing nothing of the Gospel, or disliking what they know, a form of religion which is laborious, mystical, and sacramental, meets all their necessities and commands their homage.

The *third* class consists of worldly men who wish to enjoy this life and get to heaven with as little trouble as possible. Such men, the world over, are *High Churchmen*. To them, a Church which claims the secure and exclusive custody of the blessings of redemption, and which she professes to grant on the condition of unresisting submission to her authority and rites, is exactly the Church they desire. We need not wonder, therefore, at the long-continued and extensive prevalence of this system. It is too much in

accordance with the human heart to fail of its support or to be effectually resisted by any power short of that by which the heart is changed. We pity the blinded and infatuated victims who put their trust in *it* rather than in Christ, as they will find it to be powerless for good in the time of their greatest peril and need.

## XXVII.

## LITURGIES NOT NEEDED.

LITURGY denotes all the ceremonies in general belonging to divine service. The word comes from the Greek word "Leitourgia," signifying "service, public ministry." In a more restricted sense, Liturgy is used among the Romanists to signify the Mass, and among Protestants the Common Prayer.

It cannot be alleged with any plausibility that a liturgy was prescribed by the authority of Christ or sanctioned by primitive, apostolic usage in His Church. We certainly read of none. Nor do we find the smallest hint that anything of the kind was then employed in either public or social worship. Is there a probable example of the use of one in the New Testament? Can any one believe that Paul used a prescribed form of prayer when he took leave of the Elders of Ephesus after he gave them a solemn charge. Can it be imagined that he used a liturgy when, in bidding farewell to a circle of friends in the city of Tyre, who had treated him with kindness,

he kneeled down on the shore and prayed with them? Or can we suppose that he and Silas read from a book when at midnight, in the prison of Philippi, they prayed and sang praises unto God? Again, when Paul exhorted Timothy to see that "Kings and all in authority" were remembered in public prayer, is it not evident that the Church had no liturgy? If it had been furnished with one and confined to it, such direction would have been unnecessary, or rather absurd; for they would have had their prayers all prepared to their hand. In short, when we find prayer spoken of in the New Testament on a great variety of occasions, and in a great variety of language, is it not passing strange, if liturgies were then used, that no turn of expression, giving the remotest hint of it, should be employed? Surely if forms of prayer had been regarded in the days of the Apostles, as not only obligatory, but so highly important as even some professed Protestants seem now to regard them, who can believe that the inspired writers would have passed over them in entire silence.

No such thing as a prescribed form of prayer appears to have been known in the Christian Churches for several hundred years after Christ. The contrary indeed is often asserted by the friends of liturgies, but wholly without evidence,

nay against the most conclusive evidence. The most respectable early writers who undertake to give an account of the worship of the early Christians, make use of language which is utterly irreconcileable with the practice of reading prayers. They tell us that the minister or person who led in prayer, "poured out prayers according to his ability;" that he prayed "closing his bodily eyes, and lifting up the eyes of his mind, and stretching forth his hands toward heaven." Socrates and Sozomen, respectable ecclesiastical historians who wrote in the fifth century, both concur in declaring that in their day, "No two persons were found to use the same words in public worship." And Augustine, who was nearly their contemporary, declares in relation to this subject, "There is freedom to use different words, provided the same things are mentioned in prayer." Basil, in the fourth century, giving directions about prayer, remarks that there were two parts of this service; *first*, thanksgiving and praise; and *secondly*, petition. He advises to begin with the former, and, in doing it, to make choice of the language of Scripture. After giving an example of his meaning, he adds: "When thou hast praised Him out of the Scriptures, as thou art able, then proceed to petition." Would not all this be manifestly ab-

surd, if public prayer had been a prescribed liturgy in Basil's days? The truth is, it is evident that extemporary or free prayer was generally used in the primitive Church, and continued to be used, until orthodoxy and piety declined, and the grace as well as the gift of prayer greatly diminished. Then ministers began to seek the best aid that they could procure. The Church, however, at large, even then provided no liturgies; but each pastor who felt unable to pray extemporaneously, procured prayers composed by other individuals, which he used in public. Accordingly Augustine tells us, that some ministers in his day (a period in which we have ample evidence that many of the sacred order were so uneducated as to be unable to write their own names,) "lighted upon prayers which were composed not only by ignorant babblers, but also by heretics; and through the simplicity of their ignorance, having no proper discernment, they made use of them, supposing them to be good." Surely this could never have happened, if the Church had been accustomed, at that time, to the use of prescribed liturgies. In short, the very first document, in the form of a prayer-book, of which we read, is a *Libellus Officialis*, mentioned in the proceedings of the Council of Toledo, in the year 633 after Christ; and that was evidently rather a directory

for the worship of God, than a complete liturgy. The first hint to be found, of an ecclesiastical body interposing to regulate the business of public prayer, appears about the middle of the fifth century.

If the Apostles or any apostolic men had prepared and given to the Church anything like a liturgy, we should, doubtless, have had it preserved and transmitted, with care, to posterity. The Church in this case would have had one uniform book of prayers, which would have been in use, and held precious, throughout the whole Christian community. But nothing of this kind has ever been pretended to exist. When liturgies were gradually introduced into general use in the sixth and subsequent centuries, on account of the decline of piety and learning among the clergy, there was no uniformity even among the Churches of the same State or Kingdom. Every Bishop in his own Diocese appointed what prayers he pleased, and even indulged his taste for variety. Accordingly, it is a notorious fact, which confirms this statement, that when the Reformation commenced in England, the established Romish Church in that country had no single uniform liturgy for the whole kingdom; but there seems to have been a different one for the diocese of every Bishop. And when in the second year of

King Edward's reign, the principal ecclesiastical dignitaries of the Kingdom were directed to digest and report one uniform plan for the public service of the whole Church, they collated and compared the five Romish missals of the several dioceses of Sarum, York, Hereford, Bangor, and Lincoln; and out of these formed a liturgy for the Protestant Episcopal Church of England. So that the prayer-books, which had been used in five Popish Bishopricks, constituted the basis of the first liturgy of King Edward, and consequently of the book of "Common Prayer," as now used in Great Britain and the United States. This liturgy, at first, contained a number of things so grossly Popish, that when it was read by Calvin and others, on the continent of Europe, to whom copies were sent for the obtaining their opinion, their severe criticism led to another review, and a considerable purgation. Still a number of articles were left, acknowledged on all hands to have been adopted from the missals of the Church of Rome, which exceedingly grieved the more pious and evangelical part of the Church; but which the Queen and the Ecclesiastics more immediately around her person, refused to exclude. Their antiquity was pleaded as an argument in their favor.

The attention of those who are opposed to

liturgies or prescribed forms of prayer, is often directed to the Lord's Prayer, as intended, in the judgment of the liturgical party, by Christ to be a *form* for the Church. Now, in regard to this prayer, it is important to notice that it is not given in the same words by any two of the Evangelists. Besides, it may be asked, if our blessed Lord designed that the "ipsissima verba" *the very words*, of this prayer should be used, by what authority have Bishops and Councils themselves departed so widely from this brief, simple form of words? If I am sacredly restricted to the language of the "Lord's Prayer," not two minutes in length, how could I, in conscience, use a liturgy of *human* compilation, larger than the whole New Testament. The truth is, the great Teacher only meant to give a standing example of what constitutes the proper *spirit* and *subjects* of prayer. So the Apostles understood this matter, as their own practice unquestionably shows. The prayers offered by the disciples of Christ *subsequently* to the period when He thus taught them, that are recorded at length in the Acts of the Apostles, grew out of the peculiar condition in which they were offered. And yet in not one of them is there one word of the Lord's prayer, nor the remotest allusion to it. The prayer of the Apostles on the appointment of Matthias to the apostleship; their

prayer on the release of Peter and John from the Jewish council; and Paul's noble supplication, as recorded in the third chapter of his Epistle to the Ephesians, have not the slightest reference to the Lord's Prayer, but in method and thought, are entirely different from it throughout. They were prayers for special occasions; called for by the occasion itself; offered without the least restriction by this prescribed form; and under circumstances in which this form of prayer would have been altogether inappropriate. There are also instructions on the subject of prayer scattered throughout the Epistles, in addition to those given in the Lord's prayer, and which this form does not include. We are taught to offer all our supplications "*in the name of Christ*," which this prayer says nothing about; evidently teaching us that there are other and superadded revelations on this subject, and that this form, excellent as it is, is not the *sole directory*. Jesus Christ has no where authorized a restriction to any set form of prayer.

Not only did *not* Christ institute a liturgy or prescribed form of prayer, but there are several serious objections to it which ought to be pondered by those who have the cause of evangelical religion at heart. In the *first* place these forms *invert* the order of prayer. They make the words

lead the heart, and not the heart the words. True prayer flows from the heart. The heart is the seat of supplication. This truth is indeed so obvious that the best writers, who are the strenuous advocates of forms, contend for them only as aids to the worship of the heart. But in doing this, they do no more, even by their own showing, than make the *lips* affect the *heart*; whereas the nature of the case, the meaning of the terms, and the uniform teachings of God's word, make the *heart* in prayer *affect* the *lips*. It is in prayer as it is in speaking. Before a man *speaks* he must have something to say; his thoughts must first give an impulse to his tongue. Before he *prays* he must have thoughts and emotions to utter. His *heart* must move *first*; his lips afterwards. This is the true order of prayer. No man begins prayer with mere words, as *forms* teach him to do. We do not *deny* but that the *heart may* follow the words, but only affirm that the words *ought* to follow the heart. When we read in the Scriptures of men "stirring up *themselves* to take hold on God," who does not see that this is an intellectual and spiritual stirring, and not a rhetorical effort? It is not an effort of the lips to affect the heart, but an effort of the heart to affect the lips. And hence it is that an habitual reliance upon forms of prayer encourages spiritual

sloth, and an idle mind, and tempts men who read or repeat a prayer, to be careless of self-examination and too little solicitous of exciting grace in the heart to pray. We do not by any means say that men are hypocrites whose religious worship is restricted by forms; on the other hand, we have no doubt of the piety, the eminent piety, of many of them. But this we say, that the natural tendency of their system is to encourage hypocrisy. Another objection to a liturgy or prescribed form of prayer is that it checks the teachings of the Holy Spirit. God has promised to give the spirit of prayer and supplication. For what? To indite *our own* petitions at His throne. Does the man need this influence who finds them already indited in a book? It is said he needs this influence to enable him to enter into the import or meaning of the prescribed form? It is nowhere promised for this purpose. He has no certain evidence that the original authors of the form he uses, were influenced by the Spirit of God. For while God has promised to give the spirit of prayer to those who pray, He has nowhere promised to give His Spirit to any man or set of men, to enable them to *write* prayers for *other people*. And what is still more to our purpose, the Apostle Paul, in giving an account of the work of the Spirit on the Christian's heart in

prayer, says: "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth *our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought.*" Now if we use prayers that are made for us, it is *not true* that we do not know what we should pray for as we ought. We *do* know, because we have all our requests before us in the book. Either we do know or we do not. If we do not, then, in using forms, our own requests are not offered. If we do, the Apostle is in a sad mistake. But the mistake is not Paul's; it is in the book of prayer, which professes to know what we should pray for as we ought, which the spirit of God says we do not know, and which He himself *teaches* us when we ourselves pray.

We may add, as another objection, that prescribed forms of prayer, are in their own *nature absurd and preposterous.* The Spirit of prayer never requires men to pray in any set form of words. Its emotions are so various that it must necessarily seek its own way of expression. These emotions are often full, and such as cannot be suppressed, but must give themselves utterance in a way adapted to their own strength and tenderness. A hungry beggar does not ask alms, nor a drowning man cry for relief, only by a set form. The idea is preposterous. No more does a perishing sinner plead for mercy and grace to

help in the time of need, by a set form. The great controversy between God and His visible people, in every age, has arisen from the strong tendency of the human heart to satisfy itself with mere forms. From the corrupt state of the Church in the days of the Prophet Isaiah down to the Pharisaic formality, which was so severely rebuked by the Saviour; and from that time to the present, this is the great subject-matter of controversy. *Is it not safe to be on the right side of this great question?*

## XXVIII.

## THIS CHURCH THE PILLAR AND GROUND OF THE TRUTH.

This Spiritual, Holy, Catholic Church—this Church of the living God is the pillar and ground of the truth. The words which we render “pillar, and ground,” are nearly identical in meaning; or they may be interpreted so as simply to give intensity to the word pillar, as a very strong pillar, an unfailing pillar, a pillar that cannot be moved; so strong are its foundations and so strongly is it built.

We will not weary the reader with details, as to the interpretations given to the word “pillar,” and as to the variety of opinions as to what it refers. Because Timothy was left in Ephesus to preach, defend and support the truth, some would make *him* the pillar. Whilst in a high sense he was a pillar, as is every true minister of the word, yet were Timothy now living, he would promptly decline the honor which these interpreters would confer upon him. Others would make God the pillar; but while He is the pillar

and ground of the universe, a true interpretation forbids this application of the word. Others would make "the mystery of Godliness" in the subsequent verse, the pillar; but this would require a new arrangement of the entire passage. We believe the true meaning to be, that which lies on the very face of the text, that the *Church*, not the Church of Rome, nor the Church of England, nor the Church of Scotland, nor *any* particular Church, but the Church of the living God, *made up of all the true members of the body of Christ throughout the world*, is the pillar and ground of the truth. That glorious Church is here brought out in contrast with the temple of the lifeless image of Diana, which was the pillar and the support of falsehood, idolatry and vice.

The temples of the Heathen were splendid structures, as is proved by those of them which still remain, and by the ruins of others. Who can even now wander amid their ruins without being awe-struck with their magnitude and beauty, ere they were crushed by the ruthless hand of barbarism! These temples were crowded with pillars supporting their ample roof, some of which are models of architecture to the present day! Upon these pillars, the laws and edicts of Kings and Emperors and Governments were hung, to be read by the people. And when the

people desired to know the laws and edicts, to which their attention and obedience were required, they resorted to the pillars, in the temples, which held them up for their perusal. It *may* be that the Apostle had this fact in his mind; and if so, how beautifully it illustrates the way and manner in which the Church is the pillar and ground of the truth. It is to embody the truth, as it is in Christ, in its own spiritual life and conduct, and to hold it forth to be read and known of all men. That is the only true Church—the only one with which salvation is connected, that is an embodiment of the truth, that loves the truth, that is in harmony with the truth, that reflects the truth, and honors the truth and aims to exhibit it in all its fullness to a perishing world.

If this interpretation be admitted, then it will follow:

1. *That the pillar neither makes nor modifies the laws.* These were enacted by supreme authority and were hung on the pillars to be read by the people. So the Church has no right to make new laws or to modify those already given by God. The law of the Lord is perfect and it must be preserved from all additions or subtractions. The only, simple duty of the Church is to hold forth the laws of the King of Zion in their purity,

to be known and read of all men. If this principle be surrendered, our religious liberty is gone; for religious liberty consists in refusing to submit to any authority but that of God; in refusing to receive, as of divine authority, anything not plainly taught in the Bible.

2. *The pillar gives no efficacy to the laws.* It cannot make men read them nor obey them. It holds them up, and then men disobey them at their peril. So the Church gives no efficacy to the truth. That is the work of the Spirit. All pretension to such power is not only pretentious and deceptive, but blasphemous. The simple mission of the Church is to hold up the truth—to prophesy to the dry bones and then to pray, "Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain that they may live!"

3. *This pillar cannot suppress the laws of the King and put up others in their place, as more conducive, in its estimation, to the good of the subject.* This would be virtually calling in question the authority of the King and dethroning *him*; as the power which repeals, modifies or enacts the laws, is the supreme power. And this is the crying and horrible sin of the Church of Rome, and the one which subjects it to the curse of Anathema, Maranatha. It hides the truth from the people, and teaches them for doctrines the

commandments of men. It puts up a pillar of its own, and putting aside the revelation of God, it covers that pillar with its own teachings, teachings subversive of reason, common sense, and the true well-being of *all*.

4. *The truth which the pillar is to hold up for universal perusal is not any formulary of doctrine of human contrivance.* Such contrivances are very well in their place and they may possibly embody nothing but sound scriptural truth. Yet it is not these symbols, but the revelations of the spirit by Prophets and Apostles, as contained in the *Bible*, which the Church is to hold forth. Symbols are nothing; but as they are based upon the revelations of God. They are worse than nothing, when they either oppose, pervert, distort, or obscure them. By being enlightened, quickened, purified, moulded inwardly and outwardly by the truths of the Scriptures, by preserving the Scriptures in their integrity, by preserving their doctrines and institutions from corruption, by transmitting them from age to age in their original purity, by truthful translations of them into the tongues or languages of all people, by her efforts to send the *Bible*, and the efforts of her missionaries to preach it to all the tribes and kindreds of the earth, the living Church of the living God has shown and is now

showing herself to be emphatically the pillar and ground of the *truth*. As certainly as *this* Church continues to live, so certain it will be that the truth of God will be perpetuated among men. The presence and indwelling of this truth is the secret of its life and the source of its power.

## XXIX.

## THE GRADUAL CHANGE.

DURING the Apostolic age, the form and character of the Christian Church were truly glorious. The Apostles and others, with wonderful diligence, boldness and prudence, published the truths of the Gospel, and illustrated in their lives, the power and beauty of faith, holiness, and charity. The converts to the Gospel believed the Gospel, and cordially surrendered themselves and all they had, to the honor, service, influence, government, and disposal of the Lord Jesus, as their Head, Saviour, and King; denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, and living soberly, righteously and godly. They were lovers of one another, and ready to lay down their lives for the brethren. Truth, peace, holiness and order were everywhere pleasantly united. Soundness in the faith, simplicity of gospel worship, impartial exercise of discipline, and purity of conversation prevailed; and honesty, regularity, meekness, prudence, impartial equity, zeal for the honor of Christ and the sal-

vation and edification of men's souls, ran through the whole management, and government, and discipline. Christians having carefully formed their principles, not on the opinions and dictates of men, but on the unerring oracles of God, received the truth in the love and power of it; contended earnestly for the faith delivered to the saints, and kept the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. They bore one another's burdens, continued steadfastly in the Apostle's doctrine, and in fellowship in breaking of bread and in prayer. They carefully attended to all relative duties, and in whatever stations they were placed *they abode with God.*

In the latter part of the second and the beginning of the third centuries, the clergy were less bold and active in spreading the Gospel. Nevertheless, many of them were excellent men. Justin Martyr, Melito, Athenagoras, Theophilus, Clemens Alexandrinus, Tertullian and others, who were themselves somewhat tainted with errors in doctrine and errors in practice, wrote well and vigorously in opposition to numerous heretics who attempted to overthrow the Christian faith.

From about the middle of the third century to the close of it, matters still grew worse. The bold zeal, patience, and prudence of ministers;

and even the purity of Gospel truth, gradually decreased. The rise of the Sabellian, Manichean, and other heresies; the wild fancies of Origen; the schism between the Roman, African and Asiatic Churches about the rebaptising of such as had been baptised by heretics, greatly distressed the Church at this period. After the conversion of Constantine, he protected Christians and established revenues for the Christian clergy. At this time Christianity was the religion of the Court, the aristocracy and the higher classes of society, and it paved the way to honor, office, and preferment. The marked favor which the clergy received, occasioned pride and ambition. "Christians," says Eusebius, "waged, as it were, civil war among themselves. The Bishops themselves threw off all care of religion and were perpetually contending with one another, threatening, envying, hating one another."

In the fourth century this aspiring disposition became more visible. Besides lordly Bishops, we now find arch and sub-deacons, exorcists, and canonic singers. They lighted candles in the day time in their Churches; burned incense in the time of prayers and sacraments; abstained from particular meats during their stated feasts; admired celibacy; prayed to departed saints; showed a great veneration for relics; set up images in

Churches and sometimes adorned them. The clergy officiated in robes held sacred; they prayed for the dead and sometimes for the damned. They baptised the dead and allowed baptism by the laity. People made pilgrimages to the Saviour's sepulchre, and men began to transform themselves into monks.

In the sixth century we find arch-presbyters, village bishops and patriarchal thrones, with temples, feasts and litanies to angels, to the virgin Mary, to the Apostles and martyrs. And everything connected with saints was held in veneration. Multitudes of feigned miracles were said to be wrought. New rites of consecration and a new office of the mass, were introduced. Ignorance, error, profaneness, and superstition had now almost obscured the light of Christ and His Word. Neither the ordinances nor officers of the Church retained any of their primitive forms. The discipline was corrupt and remiss, especially in relation to the great. The Government was almost one perpetual struggle between the bishops, chiefly of Constantinople and Rome, as to who should be the greatest. The worship was already sufficiently ceremonious, but Gregory the Great, Bishop of Rome, about the year six hundred, made it much more so, by his canons of the mass—his canticles, antiphones, and other

superstitious additions relative to litanies, processions, lent, oblations for the dead, pontifical robes, consecrations of temples and altars, monasteries, and relics almost unnumbered. In this state of things it was easy for Mohammed to introduce his stupid and sensual delusion in the East. The eminent historian, Gibbon, says: "The Christians of the sixth century had insensibly relapsed into a semblance of Paganism. The throne of the Almighty was darkened by a cloud of martyrs, saints and angels, the objects of popular veneration." Mosheim also writes of this same century: "At this time true religion, weighed down by a heap of insane superstition, was unable to raise its head. The *early* Christians were wont to worship God and His Son only; but in this age they who were called Christians worshipped the wooden cross, the images of saints, and the bones of men."

It is a curious fact, and one in perfect harmony with the style of religion then prevailing, that in the latter part of this century, or rather at the commencement of the seventh, (A. D. 604) the Pantheon at Rome, which contained the images of all the gods of the heathen was, without the least violence designed or done in making the change, transformed into a Roman temple. The idols which were known of old by the names of

Jupiter and Venus, were christened by the names of Peter and the Virgin Mary. The statue of Jupiter received the *keys* into his hand instead of the thunderbolt he had originally; and it is devoutly kissed as Peter to the present day. Thus it seems to be, according to the words of Coleridge, that "The pastors of the Church had gradually changed the life and light of the Gospel into the very superstition they were commissioned to disperse, and thus they *paganized* christianity in order to christianize Paganism."

The creation of the first *universal Bishop*, by Phocas, forms an epoch in history from which we date the open apostacy of the Roman power from the Church of God; The "mystery of iniquity" had long secretly worked, but now its point and direction were fully revealed. The Gospel of peace was abandoned, and a system of the most implacable hostility was organized against all that is pure, lovely, and of good report. This system of corruption that defies description, twelve centuries have not in the least degree improved.

In the sixteenth century, when the great Protestant Reformation occurred, there was clear and palpable evidence that the corruption of the visible Church, so called, had increased greatly. At that time salvation was no longer the free gift of

God. It had become the stock in trade of the Pope. The issues of life and death were with him; he had the keys and the power. He stood in the place of God and received the honors and titles due to Him alone. The Bible had been taken from the people, and the clergy were permitted to put no construction upon it, other than that taught by the Pope. Arrogating the authority of God, he claimed to have power to forgive sins, and also to communicate that power to his priests. The atonement of Christ was made of none effect. The wafer blessed by the priests and eaten by the people, and the wine which the priest offered, were a valid sacrifice for sin. But the living were not only absolved from sin, for the dead could be released from the flames of purgatory by the prayers and masses of the priests. All, however, were bought with money. No money, no mass; and if no mass, no salvation. The Virgin Mary and the so-called saints were invoked, honored and worshipped.

What a palpable, gross, horrible departure is all this from the simple, beautiful, divine picture of the true Church as unfolded in the pages of the gospel! Is there any possible resemblance? Are they not antagonistical at every point? "Imagine," says an intelligent writer and traveler, "the surprise of St. Peter, were he to be present,

upon being told that that sleepy-looking old gentleman, so buried in *gold* and *jewels* as scarcely to be discernible, and borne under a magnificent canopy, on the shoulders of twelve men, clothed in the brightest scarlet, performing the pantomime of turning from one side to another his uplifted *thumb* and *two fingers*, as illustrative of the blessing of the *Holy Trinity, was his successor.*" Peter, the honest, humble fisherman, with his brown, weather-beaten face, and his net on his shoulder, is just about as much like the Pope as the true Church is like the system of Papacy.

## XXX.

## ANTAGONISTICAL FORCES.

LIKE its divine *Head*, the true Church, which is the body of Christ, has been called to contend with antagonistical forces ever since the moment of its birth. For eighteen hundred years this antagonism has been steadily maintained; now by direct attack; now producing a rival philosophy, and now subtly corrupting the Christian doctrine. "I know," said Paul, "that after my departure, shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. In the last days perilous times shall come; there shall arise men ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth; men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith." And very soon the Ebionites, Marcionites, Judaisers, Nicolaitans, Doketae and Gnostics, engaged in this work. Thus there were opened three deep fountains of error, whose deadly waters were designed to drown and sweep away this budding, heaven-descended germ—the Jewish Superstition, the Oriental Gnosticism, and the prolific Grecian

philosophers. The philosophers made no direct attack, so far as we know, until Celsus appeared, toward the end of the second century. They indeed affected to despise Christianity, until some of their own number—such as Justin, Athenagoras, Pantaemus and others—had become its advocates and exposed to public gaze the almost universal wickedness of the pagan philosophers, as well as the falseness of their theories. Then the war commenced, and it has never ceased to the present day. Ammonius, Crescens, Fronto, Porphyry, and the apostate Emperor Julian, all followed on in this line of hostility. With the fall of the Roman empire, this form of opposition ceased, to a great extent—to be revived on the continent by Spinoza, and in Great Britain by Herbert, Hobbes, Collins, Tindal, Hume, and others. It was taken up in France by the Encyclopedists, and in America by a host of sympathizing minds. It then went forward in a still more profoundly philosophical spirit, and sustained by much greater learning, in Germany. Some of these opponents have contented themselves with attacking the gospel and trying to divest it of its divine claims, while others have, but with little success, constructed rival schemes of philosophy.

Another form of this opposition has been the

corruption of Christ's doctrine by alteration and mixture. In the early ages, Judaism, dead and formal, was mixed with it by the Ebionites and Nazarines. Then the oriental theories were grafted on it by the Doketae, the Manicheans and the Gnostics; and the Grecian theory by the Neo-Platonists. Then the Montanists interwove the ascetic system with its pure principles, and the anti-Trinitarians began the work of constructing a rationalistic gospel. And to this day the process of corrupting the gospel continues, in professedly Christian countries.

We will enumerate some of the most dangerous foes which are now warring with the true Church and the Gospel, and are seriously endangering the interests of genuine Christianity and sound morality, and which must be met and vanquished.

## XXXI.

## ATHEISM.

THE first one that will claim our attention is *Atheism*. This is an unclean spirit which walks through the "dry places of the earth," seeking rest for itself and its votaries, and finding none. Defeated again and again in argument, rejected with loathing by the feelings of the heart of man, and pursued by the tremendous illustrations of the French Revolution, and of the moral degradation and decrepitude it has produced wherever it has gone, both in societies and individuals, it still lifts up here and there its brazen front and sets its mouth against the heavens.

The universe to all Atheists is an eternal, self-productive and reproductive process, a self-made and self-going machine, and not the work of an intelligent mind. Naturalism is all this system knows, and all the duties of man are included in watching, imitating, and obeying this law. Work is the only worship; the care and cleansing of the body the only holiness; life is simply a looking at and adjusting ourselves to the things of sense;

and death is simply a negation, a blank, an eternal pause, produced by the departure of a consciousness which has come and dies out with the physical organization. The Gospel of the modern Atheist may be summed up as follows: "that the soul is material and mortal, christianity an imposture, the Scriptures a forgery, the worship of God superstition, hell a fable, and heaven a dream, our life without providence and our death without hope."

Atheism is such a monstrous contradiction of all evidence, of all the powers of understanding, and the dictates of common sense, that it may well be questioned whether any man can really fall into it by a deliberate use of his judgment. All nature so clearly points out and so loudly proclaims a Creator of infinite power, wisdom and goodness, that whoever hears not His voice, and sees not its proofs, may well be thought wilfully deaf and obstinately blind. If it be evident, self-evident, to every man of thought, that there can be no effect without a cause, what shall we say of that manifold combination of effects, that series of operations, that system of wonders, which fill the universe, which present themselves to all our perceptions, and strike our minds and our senses on every side. Can any one possibly conceive that such wonderful order as is visible

everywhere should spring out of confusion? or that such perfect beauty should ever be formed by the fortuitous operations of unconscious, inactive particles of matter? We recognize the presence of God in nature in precisely the same manner in which we come to know that any intelligent, though finite being, exists besides ourselves. The outward form surely is nothing. A statue or automaton may be moulded into a perfect external likeness of a man. But the actions of the living man show that he is animated by a spirit kindred to our own, by something distinct from the mere framework of bones and muscles, which he inhabits, and which we distinguish as clearly, from the person within, as we do our own bodies from ourselves. I am conscious of power dependent on my will, and I perceive the effects produced on matter by the exertion of that will. I perceive also perfectly similar effects which I can attribute only to my brother man, and I infer, therefore, that *he* exists, and that his will is equally active in producing those effects. I do not imagine that his limbs *move themselves*, but that *he* moves them; I do not think that his eye turns towards me of its own accord with a glance of affection, or that his hand comes to mine in a friendly grasp, from an energy that is inherent in that hand alone. In

like manner, then, I say if *His* sun rolls over my head and warms me, if *His* wind cools and refreshes me, if *His* voice speaks to me in the thunder at midnight or in the whispers of the forest, or but in the rustling leaf, if *His* seasons still come round to me in their grateful vicissitudes, and wherever I look in outward nature, I behold constant action, change and joy. I do not suppose that brute and senseless matter causes all this by its inherent power, whether original or derived, but that the Spirit, the Person within, controls, vivifies, and produces all, and that all these are but outward phenomena of the Infinite God. The argument by which we reach this conclusion may be expressed in this form. Conscious, ourselves, of being at once cause and effect—voluntary, spontaneous causes in the grand, complex machinery at work within and around us—we are inevitably led to behold and acknowledge an *infinite* cause, equal to produce those stupendous effects which are everywhere visible. Knowing that we are the self-moved originators of certain events, and knowing also that what we originate we can but imperfectly control, and must always leave incomplete, we see that we are each only parts in a great, intelligent system; points in a blaze of light; hands for the transmission of a sacred torch; each, indeed,

a little world, but having life, order, beauty, and a purpose, only as types and members of the great world, which has God for its Author, guide and benefactor.

The whole intelligence of man demands a higher intelligence than its own, as the condition of its existence. What charm and what beauty are added to the starry heavens, to the savage harmony of the raging seas, to the smiling landscape of fields and woods and flowers, under the beams of the morning sun; by the thought of the Universal Spirit which silently circulates through all beings, and which seems to reveal its immortal existence and utter its voice divine, amid all the motions and all the sounds of the universe.

We have evidence of God, the infinite and the absolute, in the aspirations of the soul. What mean these unlimited and illimitable desires? Let us gain what we may, gain never brings content. Riches do not satisfy; the appetite for them, on the contrary, grows with what it feeds upon. Fame, power, and pleasure, promise to fill the soul, but they always deceive and disappoint us. Yet we still believe in something *beyond* us, that can fill and satisfy us. We pass on from measure to measure, of acquisitions, and still cry "give," and still have faith in a giver. Nor is this true of those desires only which attach

themselves to outward things. The inward man, our spiritual nature, is subject to the same great law. The more virtue we possess, the more we thirst for. Wisdom and goodness never reach the boundaries of the soul. On the contrary, every limited acquisition speaks to us of, and impels us toward, an illimitable treasure. And what is that treasure? The finite suggests an infinite one, and that is God, the Infinite, the Eternal One, the wiser than the wisest, the better than the best.

It is these boundless aspirations which have lifted so many of the great men of earth into a firm faith in God. Through *them*, genius and power become believers. Mohammed felt himself in the hands of God. Cromwell regarded the Almighty as a preternatural and ever-present aid to himself. Napoleon believed himself a man of destiny. Irreligious as were some of his acts, he yet imagined that God was his ally. This it was which impelled him to the insane project of braving the December of Moscow. To this, his faith in God, in a God who would sustain him and give him ultimately the victory, he owed no small share of his mighty achievements.

Though mighty mystery surrounds, and must ever surround the incomprehensible God, yet through faith in Him the universe is changed from

a vast dreary void, to the habitation and realm of an all-filling, wide-reigning Spirit of Light, Life and Beauty. The earth no more wanders without purpose through the fields of space, but harmoniously pursues her orbit, in obedience to the design of a mighty will. The revulsions, the struggles, and sufferings of mankind are no more the restless fermentations of a moral chaos, but the working elements, out of which an inscrutable but benevolent power is gradually evolving order and happiness. The numberless experiences of joy and sorrow, of success and defeat, which make up the history of individual life, cease to be the vagaries of fortune or chance; they become the dealings of a wise and tender parent, teaching wisdom to the heart and preparing it for eternal blessedness. The sceptre is wrung from the aimless hand of accident; his throne is overturned, and his reign forever at an end. A paternal providence, in whose all-comprehending view nothing is great and nothing small, overrules all things wisely and well to the completion of His great and benevolent designs. Every object is invested with meaning and purpose, and contributes its tributary stream to the mighty tide, which sets constantly to the great fulfilment. Life ceases to be a dark enigma, bounded by the cradle and the grave. It becomes the preparatory

state, to an existence without imperfection and without end; and death loses the visage of an all-devouring monster, to become but the stepping-stone to an eternity of joy.

What in effect, on the other hand, is the *Atheistic declaration*? "He who says that there is no God, says in the first place, not only that there is no Creator, who, with knowledge and design, brought into existence and set in motion the whole scene of things about us, but that there is no mind which thoroughly understands and comprehends the universe, and penetrates its many mysteries, and takes it into an omniscient charge. If there is no knowledge of it, there is no charge of it. The world is uncared for. It is without a ruler, without a protector. And then if the world is unknown and uncared for, it follows of course that man is unknown and uncared for by a Supreme Being. He who says that there is no God, says that he himself, that every man is without government, without protection, without salvation, is in a condition of solitariness and orphanage. He says there is no judge to right the wronged, to defend the cause of the needy and oppressed, to restore the golden balance of justice and truth, which has been disturbed by passion and by crime. He says that when the spirit of a man is bowed down by calamity, and is deserted

by human sympathy, there is no one above to resort to for strength and for sympathy; that when it is lingering on the last verge of life, there is no one to sustain and comfort it; and when it passes out of life there is no one to receive it. He says that the widow has no eternal friend, and the orphan no Almighty Father; that we are all orphans; that there is no paternal eye to watch over us, and no paternal hand to lead us, and no paternal home to shelter us at last; that we live thus forlorn, and die thus forlorn, proceeding from oblivion and returning to oblivion again."

Would it be wise—would it be expedient to *substitute* this theory for that of Christianity? Let us think for a moment what Christianity has professed to do, and what it has, in part, done for man. It has given man an object of worship, love, and infinite trust, in the person of Jesus Christ, whom it represents as at once God and man; connecting the power and the perfection of God, with the warmth, definitude, and conceivability of a man. It has given him a work—the work of preparing himself and others for more intimate communion with that divine person in another world. It has given him a directory or plan, for the proper performance of that work, in a code of morals, liberal and humane, yet strict and definite. It has provided him a

sacrifice for his sins in the bleeding Lamb and incarnate love of God. It has given him the promise of a supernatural agency to aid him in believing on that sacrifice and in obeying that code. And it has given him motives to nerve him for duty, and to cheer him under discouragement, in the prospect of a future world where the good shall be made triumphant over sin and crowned with everlasting felicity.

Such are some of the contributions which Christianity has professed to make to the knowledge, the progress, the happiness of man. Now let us glance briefly at the views and prospects which Atheism would *substitute* for them. And first as to the *object* of the Atheist's worship. It is the universe of *matter*, or its laws and combinations. Let us think of it for a moment. It is the worship of an object, admitted to be not only mysterious, but absolutely and forever contradictory. It is the worship of an object which can be demonstrated to be finite. It is the worship of an object which the mind of the worshipper might feel to be inferior to himself, to his own ideal, and, in a sense, to his own capacity. It is the love of an object which, in the course of its development, has exhibited or inflicted the most appalling evils and sufferings upon beings apparently innocent, as well as reputed guilty, evils

and sufferings of which Atheism, in reality, offers no explanation, and to which it does not promise an end. It is the trust and hope in an object which, bound by iron necessity, can hardly be expected to change materially, and which holds out to its votary little prospect for himself, except, as one of its own poets has expressed it:

“Silence and dreamless rest forevermore.”

What could the habitual worship and love of such an object be expected to produce in the minds of most of its worshippers? Exactly the effects which, in reality, have taken place—a cold and callous heartlessness, a cheerless gloom, alternating with a ghastly levity of spirit; much apparent admiration of their idol, *Nature*, mingled with frequent misgivings, indifference, and ill-disguised contempt; the moral conduct which might be expected from a combination of ignorance of what sin truly is, and knowledge of the good produced by the observance of natural laws—in other words, at the best, *a well-regulated animalism*.

Plan or code of work the Atheist has none; or rather, he has a thousand codes and plans, all conflicting with each other and all contending for precedence over him. Sacrifice for sin or error, committed during his work or the intervals

of it, he requires none, for he has no sin, and there is no such thing as sin in the wide universe. Supernatural agency, of course, he expects none; but he does not require it, so long as Nature has given him a good organization, a sufficient supply of electric or phosphoric matter in his brain, called, improperly, "soul." To be stimulated by such vulgar and sordid motives to good action as the fear of future punishment or the hope of future reward, he despairs. "Of all motives to do evil," as Dr. Dwight justly remarks, "the scheme of Atheism is *prolific*; of motives to do good, it is absolutely *barren*. At the same time it is founded on mere hypothesis, sustained by no evidence, and believed against demonstration and impossibility."

## XXXII.

## PANTHEISM.

WE know not whether we shall be required to define what seems so indefinite as Pantheism, and which yet, in its vagueness, is so generally known. We will try to do the best we can, and we would say, that Pantheism is that perversion of reason and language which denies God's personality, and calls some imaginary soul of the world, or the world itself, by His name. While Pantheists are fully agreed upon the propriety of getting rid of a God who could note their conduct and call them to account for it hereafter, and who would claim to exercise any authority over them here, they are by no means agreed, either in India, Germany, or America, as to what they shall call by His name. Public opinion necessitates them to say they believe in a God, but almost every one has his own private opinion as to what it is. We shall speak of it as we hear it pronounced from the lips of its prophets, as well as in the writings of its expounders in Europe and Asia. Some of them declare, that it is some absolutely

unknown cause of all the phenomena of the universe; and others, that it is the universe itself. A large class speak of it as the soul of the world, while the more materialistic regard it as the world itself, body and soul; the *soul* being the source of all the imponderable forces, such as gravitation, heat, light, electricity, magnetism, galvanism, vegetable and animal life, and especially the mesmeric influence, of which many of them regard intellect as a modification; and the *body* being the sum of all the ponderable substances, such as air, water, earth, minerals, vegetables, and bodies of animals and men. This creed is popularly expressed in the familiar sentence, "God is everything, and everything is God."

We grant at once that there is much beauty in the poetical conception of the *All*, being divine—of the universe being all-inspired by, nay, being God—much beauty, we mean, at the first glance, at a distance, and especially if the intermediate atmosphere be colored by the hues of a poetic imagination. The idea of a power of such Catholic presence having His dwelling "in the light of setting suns," and in the chambers of the thunder; in the stars; in the stars, the flowers of heaven, and in the flowers, the stars of earth; in the heart of man, and in the "burning" skin and dreadful feet of the tiger; in the soul of a

Newton compassing the firmaments, and in the little industrious bee returning freighted with honey from far-off moors ; and not even disdaining to communicate a portion of his inspiration to the serpent lurking in those sweltering woods of the tropics,

“ Which even imagination fears to tread;”

to the scorpion under his wet stone, and to the sullen spider keeping his fierce and solitary watch in the centre of his web. This is certainly a wondrous thought, supplying a *writer* many strange and striking antitheses, to the *thinker* a certain vague but plausible notion of unity, as well as many thrilling suggestions to the poetical mind.

But even after we have thus described it at its best, and with the help of personification, it appears to the inevitable eye of enlightened common sense to be a dream, and not after all the happiest of dreams. Our instincts tell us that there is a God in the universe, but recoil at the converse of the proposition, that the universe is God. They are ready to concede, although it is with certain reluctance, that spiders, serpents, mitred lizards, and a myriad more ghostly forms are from God, as well as beautiful birds and fragrant flowers and intelligent men ; but they shudder at the

thought of any or all of these being, in any sense, *parts* of God. The presence of God working *in* matter, they grant; but the idea of God *being* matter, or matter being God, they reject. Why do we distinguish between the mind and the body? Because we cannot do else. We *can* conceive of them harmonizing and united; we can conceive of them separated, but we cannot conceive of them confused. A sublime idea and a great toe, can never be thought of as *differing* only in *degree*. And why do we distinguish between the creation and the Great Spirit who is in it? Because we cannot fail to do so. We can conceive of them connected together through a mysterious union; we can conceive of them as existing apart; but we cannot conceive of them as *identified*. The Being who has launched and who leads *Orion* night after night through the starry sea, differs in something else than mere degree or mere distance from the fox that comes forth in the light of that constellation to steal, and from the rat whose furtive eye watches it as he retires to his narrow and unclean hole.

*Pantheism* contains in it no solution of the problems, and no explanation of the difficulties of the universe. The existence of natural and moral evil; the marks of design and contrivance in most objects, and the comparative absence of

these in some; the facts of separate and successive beginnings (we call them not at present *creations*) of different species of animals and of various forms of matter; the unequal difference and apparent dilution of this Divine Something of which they speak; the deep *differentia* which exists between man and the lower animals; the origin of that belief in a Personal Deity, which he has in general entertained, and of the conscience which is in him; and the many abortive births and unfinished designs to be found in the world of nature—*these* are only a few of the puzzles and perplexities which this system, unable to account for, tries to evade by slumping them all up as *divine*. Such philosophic criticism seems to us very feeble and cowardly. It is like the plan pursued by some of the German writers, who, unable to see the meaning or worth of many things in Shakespeare, nevertheless maintain that they are all as they ought to have been, and that genius like his can do no wrong! *Christianity*, on the other hand, offers in its doctrines of a *Devil* and a *Fall*, a certain approximate explanation, to say the least, of most of these fearful difficulties, predicts the removal of many of them, and begins to grapple with and to abate some. Pantheism raises a feeble or hollow shout of “glorious!” over objects and facts from which

every unsophisticated heart revolts, and calls certain things worthy of *God* which our instincts feel to be beneath the ideal standard of *man*. The Pantheist charges the Christian with shirking the dreadful realities of the universe, to avoid needful and painful spectacles, but he is himself more truly exposed to the charge. The Christian looks on these in the face; feels that they never would have been permitted without a good cause; that many of them are not from God; and that under the dominion of a great and good being, they must come to an end. The Pantheist, knowing that on his principles they are entirely unaccountable, is compelled to wink hard at them, to underrate their evil or malignity, and to grope into their mysterious darkness for what he calls "divine meanings," with as much success as if he were searching a charnel-house for life or a coal-stratum for gold. At the same time his instincts often oblige him to back out from his own belief; to cry, with Emerson, "There is a crack in everything God has made." The reason of this is obvious. However a subtle intellect may feel itself stopped and stunned, if not satisfied, with this enormous evasion called the Pantheistic hypothesis, no *heart* can be content with it; nay, the moment that its misty radiance clears away, before a deliberate glance, the mind,

too, feels that it is the "baseless fabric of a vision."

But not only does Pantheism really remove none of the general difficulties, but it is encumbered with great and peculiar difficulties of its own. It destroys whatever *moral* character and purpose have been conceived to exist in the universe. Some of its prophets, indeed, talk much about the "*justice*" of nature; the world being full of judgment days; justice being done now; every wrong being redressed even in this world; the laws of nature being intensely retributive and moral. But this language, when examined carefully, turns out to mean, either nothing at all, or a truth which Pantheism denies. We were in the habit of supposing that "*justice*," "*judgment*" and "*retribution*," implied consciousness, and were the attributes of a conscious and intelligent mind. But it seems we were totally mistaken. According to this new doctrine, a nettle which resents the rashness of the boy who heedlessly grasps it, by stinging his hand to the quick, is entitled to the epithet "*just*," and the Scottish thistle, with its motto, "*Nemo me impune laces- sit*," must be a very Aristides of justice. The rain, too, which wets the imprudent person who ventures abroad in a winter night unprotected, and gives him, it may be, a very violent, or per-

haps, a deadly cold, must also be characterized by the same epithet—"just." The Sun is a Solon, when he darts a stroke which inflames the brain of the foolish man who has gone out bare-headed beneath his noonday beams. We wonder that such theorists do not perceive that on their own ground *injustice*, may in like manner, be predicated of material objects. The sea is unjust, when it swallows up the infants in a drowning vessel, or engulphs the hardy pilot, who has done his duty and dies at his post. The fire is unjust when it burns the innocent birds in the thousand surprised nests of a flaming forest. Vain to say, *but* there is no *intention* in this class of actions, and, therefore, they are not cruel. Neither, we retort, is there any intention on their principles, in the other, and yet they call them just. Vain to say, the difficulties implied in such facts press equally on *Theism*. We reply that *they do not* on *Christian Theism*, which supposes them permitted for inscrutable, but real purposes, connected with the plans of infinite mind, which promises compensation in another world for all wrongs, and which predicts the *end* of such fearful phenomena.

Germany, of all other countries, is, perhaps, the most prolific soil of Pantheism. It is imported from thence into our own. It is the native fruit

of her metaphysics. The mental habitudes of her people are peculiarly thoughtful and reflective. Philosophy, not the experimental and inductive, but the speculative and idealistic, is natural to the German mind. Her schools have been absorbed in discussing the same great questions, which were discussed over and over again in the schools of the ancients. Those mysterious problems which regard the principles of things, the existence and nature of God, the relations between Him and the universe, and the origin of human knowledge—problems on the solution of which the greatest minds in past ages have been employed with so little profit—possess a peculiar charm for the philosophers of the Continent. There is this important difference between the Pantheism of the old world and that of the new, between that of ancient Greece and India and that of modern Germany: the one sprung up and flourished in the absence of an authoritative revelation from Heaven, while the other has risen and spread in contempt of it. The German has become a Pantheist with the Bible in his hand and his foot in the birth-place of the Reformation.

Spinoza has been justly regarded as the father of modern Pantheism. Others had held it as a vague, dreamy doctrine, but Spinoza was the first

to give it a rigid, logical form. Schelling and Hegel, whose names are identified with the Pantheism of the nineteenth century, are the fruit of his labors. They have refined and carried out the system to which Spinoza gave the form.

That the doctrines of the modern Transcendentalists, as well as those of Spinoza, Schelling, and Hegel, are really and truly Pantheistic, appears from the fact that they all hold to but *one essence* or *one substance* in the universe. They expressly deny that God created or produced the world *out of nothing*, or that He gave existence to beings and things, the substance or matter of which had no previous existence. They say He created or brought forth the world *from himself*, or found it out of His own *substance*; and also that He still exists in the created universe, and the created universe in Him, thus constituting an *absolute unity*, as to essence or substance. That the epithet Pantheistic may be properly applied to such doctrines, seems undeniable.

As Pantheists, the Transcendentalists must behold God, or the divine nature and essence in everything that exists. Of course none of them can ever doubt the existence of God, in their sense of the term, *whatever it may be*; or be in the least danger of Atheism, for they cannot believe anything to exist without finding God in it.

They see Him, they feel Him, they have sensible perception of His very substance in every object around. Moreover, if our souls are only portions of the Divinity, if they are really God working in us, *then* there is solid ground for the belief that *spontaneous reason* always sees the true nature of things, or has *divine* knowledge of the objects of its contemplation. And again, if it is the *Divine nature* which lives and acts in all creatures, then all their action is *divine* action. All created intelligences think and feel and act as God acts in them, and of course precisely as He would have them. There can then be nothing *wrong*, nothing *sinful*, in the character or conduct of any rational being. There may be imperfection, or imperfect action, because the *whole* power of God is not exerted, but every act, as far as it goes, is just what it should be, just such as best pleases God. And hence, though men may sigh over their imperfections, or may ardently desire and strive to become more perfect, yet they can have no reason for *repentance*, for *sorrow*, and *shame*, and *self-condemnation*, for anything they have done or have omitted to do. Neither can they feel themselves to need any *radical change of character* to make them acceptable to God; or any *Redeemer* to rescue them from impending perdition. All they need is to foster the divinity within, to give

it more full scope and more perfect action, *then* they will become all that it is possible they should be, and all they can reasonably desire. These inferences from their principles are not palmed upon Transcendentalists by their adversaries, but are admitted and defended by their ablest writers. Says one of them: "Holding, as they do, but one essence of all things, which essence is God, Pantheists must deny the existence of essential evil. All evil is negative—it is imperfection, non-growth. It is not essential but modal. Of course there can be no such thing as hereditary sin—a tendency positively sinful to the soul. Sin is not a wilful transgression of a righteous law, but the difficulty and obstruction which the Infinite meets with, in entering into the finite. *Regeneration* is nothing but an ingress of God into the soul, before which sin disappears as darkness before the rising sun. Pantheists hold also to the atonement or at-one-ment between the soul and God. This is strictly a unity or *oneness of essence*, to be brought about by the incarnation of the spirit of God (in us) which is going on in us as we grow in holiness. As we grow wise, just and pure—in a word, *holy*, we grow to be one with Him in mode, as we always were in essence. This atonement is effected by *Christ*, only in as far as He taught the manner in which

it was to be accomplished more fully than any other, and gave us a better illustration of the method and result in His own person than any one else that has ever lived."

As will appear from the representation we have given of it, Pantheism is not only unscriptural and anti-scriptural, but unreasonable and *grossly absurd*. The God of the Bible is *one—personal* God, distinct from, and supreme over, all His works. He now rules and will hereafter judge all intelligent creatures, and will render to every one according to his works.

Indeed, we may say as the summing up of our thoughts in respect to this theory, that it is a system of *deception* and *hypocrisy*. If a man knows the meaning of the words he uses, and uses them to convey a contrary meaning, he is a deceiver. The name of God, used as a proper name, in the English tongue, means "the Supreme Being; Jehovah, the Eternal and Infinite Spirit; the Creator and Sovereign of the universe." If then a man says he believes in God, but when forced to explain *what* he means by that name, says he means steam, heat, electricity, galvanism, magnetism, mesmeric force, Odyle, animal life, the soul of man, or the sum of all the intelligences in the universe, he is a deceiver and vain talker, abusing language to conceal his impiety. *Pan-*

*theism is simply Jesuitical Atheism*, willing to dethrone Jehovah, but unable and unwilling to place any other being in His stead, as Creator and Ruler of the universe. Yet conscious that mankind will never embrace open Atheism, Pantheists profess to believe in God, only that they may steal His name to cloak their Atheism. We, in common with all who believe in God, demand that as their divinity is, by their own confession, essentially different from God, they shall use a different word to describe it. Let them call it Brahma, as their brethren in India do, or any other name not appropriated to any existing being in heaven or earth, or under the earth; and let them cease to profane religion and common sense by affixing the holy name of the *Supreme* to their *thousand headed monster*.

## XXXIII.

## FORMALISM.

ST. PAUL, in writing to Timothy, clearly and pointedly foretold what classes of persons should exist in the latter days. There is one class of which he speaks as "having a *form of godliness*, but denying the power." In every age of the Church since the time of the Apostle, this class has been a large one. In our remarks upon this subject we do not wish to be understood as intimating that the forms of religion are unimportant, or that the use of them necessarily implies the existence of a formal spirit. So far from this being the case, we have no hesitation in saying that the forms of religion are ordained by the Author of religion, and are adapted to its promotion, if they are not essential to its continued existence. Other things being equal, we have a right to expect the greatest amount of genuine piety where these Scriptural forms are most faithfully observed. Still they are capable of being perverted, and indeed they often *are* actually perverted, to foster a self-righteous spirit,

and made to become the means of spiritual death instead of life.

Formalism is the tendency of the mind to *rest* in the mere externals of religion, to the neglect of the inner life of religion itself. It is the very essence of formalism to set the outward institutions above the inward truths; to be punctilious in going the round of ceremonial observances while neglectful of those spiritual sacrifices with which God is well pleased; to substitute means in the place of ends; and to rest in the type and symbol without rising to the glorious reality. The Church and the Sacraments, the symbol and the lettered creed, fill the sphere of its vision and draw forth its devotion, to the almost utter exclusion of those grand spiritual objects that are unseen and eternal.

It is quite possible that the individual who has settled down into real formalism, may in other days have been no stranger to the awakening and convincing influences of the Holy Spirit. He may have felt for a season that his soul was in jeopardy, and that, unless he took refuge in the grace of the Gospel, he must inevitably perish. But having meditated and prayed and wept and made various ineffectual efforts to find relief—ineffectual, because made in the exercise of a legal spirit—and having grown weary or dis-

couraged in *this* course, he resolves at length upon another. Instead of endeavoring to let go his own righteousness as a ground of hope, he practically determines to cling to it more closely than ever; and as God is not a hard Master, he hopes for acceptance on the ground of his intended obedience. And thus begins his course as a *Formalist*. Or it may be that he advances still farther, and instead of avowedly desisting from the effort to enter in at the straight gate, apparently comes upon the Evangelical ground, and *professes* a delightful confidence in the Saviour, and a cordial approbation of His work; and makes a public profession of his faith with a full conviction that he has "tasted that the Lord is gracious;" but ere long it becomes evident to himself and others, that his experience was only a *dream*; and he feels and manifests as much interest in the objects of sense, and as little in the objects of faith, as he did previous to the time when his sins were set in order before him. If he were not *in* the Church, he would now have no motive to come into it; but he has done an act which places him among the professed followers of Christ, and the pride of consistency stands in the way of openly renouncing his profession, and he compromises between the claims of his conscience and of his character on the one

hand, and the claims of his wordly and corrupt inclinations on the other, by remaining in the Church, and observing her forms and holding to her standards, while he feels *not* the motions of a principle of spiritual life. And *this compromise* once made, he may be considered as having deliberately adopted a course and habit of Formalism. *Or, again*, as the case may possibly be, the individual concerned may never have been the subject of any special awakening influence. He may have been educated in a religious atmosphere and have had his attention early directed to the forms of religion, and have heard their importance frequently and earnestly inculcated, and he may have come to ascribe an undue importance to *these*, apart from the spirit of piety; and finally he may, in a measure unconsciously, have taken up the observance of them as a *substitute for piety*, and now he is in the Church as thorough-going a Formalist as it contains. Aim as heavy a blow at the life of godliness as you will, and *he* evinces no anxiety for the result, but touch one of its forms, and he instantly takes the alarm, as if you were laying profane hands on the ark of God.

The individual who comes under the influence of *Formalism* may possibly be a thorough student of the Bible, and may be familiarly acquainted not only with the evidences of Christianity, but

with its doctrines. At any rate, he either intelligently or blindly avows his attachment to the formularies of that branch of the Church with which he is connected. And while he professes to hold fast the form of sound words, he is regular in his attendance upon all the instituted means of grace, and nothing but imperious necessity ever prevents his taking his seat at the communion table, in the Sanctuary, and *perhaps* in the lecture room. He may also be exemplary in the performance of the various moral duties of life, and may not only abstain from all acts of injustice toward his fellow-men, but may perform many charitable deeds, and may stand forth the patron of many good institutions. Nay he may even go through the form of family prayer and secret prayer—in short he may do every *external* act which a true Christian would do, and may so closely resemble a true Christian in his deportment, as to render it impossible for any but the all-penetrating eye of God to distinguish between them. But, *after all*, there has been no quickening influence imparted to the affections. The truths of the Gospel have been received into the mind merely as the materials for a barren speculation. The lips have uttered forth their persuasion of these truths, either in obedience to the general dictates of

conscience or from the mere calculations of self-interest. And the hands and the feet, and the whole body, though they have moved by *rule*, have never moved under the influence of truly devout and sanctified affections.

“This tendency to Formalism was strongly evinced by God’s ancient people, the Jews. The Levitical economy, containing a large machinery of divinely appointed rites and ceremonies, though burdensome when compared with the Gospel, was admirably adapted to the state of the Jews, in conveying to their minds and preserving in their midst those elements of divine truth which have been fully developed in all their simplicity and majesty in the Gospel age. But the history of the Jews, as presented to us, shows that their besetting sin was to idolize the symbol instead of rising from it to the thing signified,—to go the mere round of external observances, neglectful of the cultivation of the heart and that spiritual worship which God requires.

“It deserves special notice that in the same record where the typical and ritual system is so fully and minutely detailed, the most strict cautions are given against *resting* in it; and the most terrible denunciations are uttered against those who substitute the symbol in the place of the invisible reality. In the judgment of God the

divinely appointed rites were repudiated as worthless when men converted them into idols and failed to be led by them to the high spiritual realities. To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? was the question which Jehovah addressed to the heartless formalists among the ancient Hebrews. This system of religious formalism appeared in all its odiousness among the Pharisees. And it was against the men who were scrupulously exact in paying tithe of mint, anise, and cummin, while regardless of the weightier matters of the law—judgment, mercy and faith—that the meek and lowly Saviour pronounced the most tremendous woes."

We need hardly say that this whole system of *Formalism* is diametrically opposed to the principles and spirit of the Gospel. It says "Our Fathers worshipped in this mountain." Christ says, "The hour is come when ye shall neither in this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him, must worship Him in spirit and in truth." Formalism says "We who fast so often, pray so fervently, and attend on the sacraments so punctually, are God's people." Christ replies, "He is not a Jew which is one *outwardly*, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh, but he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and

circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men but of God." Formalism says, "We have Abraham to our Father, and are in the line of the true Patriarchal or Apostolical succession." Christ says, "They are the circumcision (or the true seed of Abraham) which worship God in the spirit and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." Formalism says, "Baptism is regeneration—only be baptized—come to the Sacramental table, and ye shall be saved." Christ says, "Neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision, but a *new creature*." There is not less communion between light and darkness than between such a system and the spiritual Christianity taught by Christ and his Apostles. Christianity does not overlook what a man may have *done*, but it looks more to what a man *is*. It gives no countenance whatever to the neglecting of sacred rites and seasons, but it says to the man who attaches an undue importance to them, while neglecting the weightier matters of the law, "These things ought ye to have done, and not to leave the others undone."

Formalism ever tends to produce a spirit of intolerance. In proportion as men are imbued with the genuine Spirit of Christ they will have enlarged, liberal hearts. Love is represented in

almost every page of the New Testament as the distinctive and predominant character of the Christian. It is not an attachment to men merely because they are members of this or that particular society, but because they belong to the true, spiritual Church of the living God. It is not entwined around a man because he bears a humanly devised name, but because he bears in his own bosom and shows in his life the image of the Saviour. Nor does it confine its regards to those who are united to the common Saviour, but it looks on the wide world with an eye of compassion, and feels towards it those stirrings of benevolence which seek to save that which is lost. It is like the Sun in the firmament, which confines not its radiance to any little spot on the surface of the earth, but spreads it over the wide fields of creation.

Now Formalism begets a spirit the reverse of all this. Its love is all pent up within the pale of its own community, and whatever religious zeal it possesses is spent on its own creed and ceremonies. From the narrow and sectarian spirit of its so-called religion, it assumes toward all who may be without the sphere of its brotherhood an attitude of scowling defiance. The self-complacent and malignant feeling it naturally tends to produce, has oftentimes revealed itself in

the history of the Church in persecuting the most Christ-like men with fiendish cruelty. To illustrate our meaning, we will introduce to the reader the case of Dr. Alexander Leighton, against whom the intolerance of the English Hierarchy broke forth under the reign of Charles the First. For some theological publication that he had given to the world, he was arrested early in 1629, hurried to a wretched cell in Newgate, low, damp, and without light, except what was admitted along with the rain from an aperture in the roof. Here he lay from Tuesday night till Thursday noon without food; and for fourteen days he endured solitary confinement in this miserable place. After sixteen weeks captivity he was served with information of the crimes with which he was charged, but he was sick and unable to attend. Yet, though thus afflicted, this aged and venerable divine was condemned to a punishment that the stoutest ruffian could hardly have endured. It was to be degraded as a minister, to have his ears cut off, his nose slit, to be branded in the face, to stand in the pillory, to be whipped at a post, to pay a fine of one thousand pounds, and to suffer punishment till it was paid. Which terrible and cruel sentence, when *Archbishop Laud* heard pronounced, he pulled off his hat, and holding up his hands, gave thanks to God who had

given the Church victory over her enemies. *All* ecclesiasticism and formalism that stops short of the renewal of the heart or of true evangelical piety, tends to this proscriptive intolerance, and if possessed of power would reveal itself in this terrible form. There is no one error against which the Bible arrays all its doctrines, all its precepts, all its penalties, all its promises, all its descriptions of character, all its views of God and of the way of salvation by His Son, with greater uniformity and power, than against a merely *formal* religion.

## XXXIV.

## SWEDENBORGIANISM.

THE Swedenborgians are so called from Emanuel Swedenborg, son of Jasper Swedenborg, Bishop of West-Gothia. He was born at Stockholm in the year 1689, and died 1772. He early enjoyed all the advantages of a liberal education, having studied with great industry in the academy of Upsal, and in the universities of England, Holland, France, and Germany. Endowed with uncommon talents, his progress in the sciences was rapid and extensive; and at an early period in life, he distinguished himself by various publications on philosophical subjects.

His philosophic studies led him to refer natural phenomena to spiritual agency, and to suppose that there is a close connection between the two worlds of matter and spirit. Hence his system teaches us to consider all the visible universe, with everything that it contains, as a theatre and representation of the invisible world, from which it first derived its existence, and by connection with which it continually subsists.

Swedenborg's extraordinary genius and learning, accompanied with the purity of his life and uprightness of his character, attracted the public notice. Hence he received various literary and political honors. These, however, he considered of small importance, compared with the distinguished privilege of having, as he supposed, his spiritual sight opened, and conversing with spirits and angels in the spiritual world.

He first began to have his revelations in London. He asserted that on a certain night, a man appeared to him in the midst of a strong, shining light, and said: "I am God, the Lord, the Creator and Redeemer; I have chosen thee to explain to men the interior and spiritual sense of the sacred writings. I will dictate to thee what thou oughtest to write." He affirmed that after this period, his spiritual sight was opened so far that he could see, in the most clear and distinct manner, what passed in the spiritual world, and converse with angels and spirits in the same manner as with men. Accordingly, in his "Treatise concerning Heaven and Hell," he relates the wonders which he saw in the invisible worlds, and gives an account of various and hitherto unknown particulars relating to the peace, the happiness, the light, the order of Heaven; together with the forms, the functions, the habitations,

and even the garments of the heavenly inhabitants.

There are many arguments of great cogency, which clearly show that Swedenborg was not, as he claimed to be, a divine messenger, and that his revelations are not reliable and trustworthy.

1. He has given no *proofs* that he *was* such a messenger. Christ and his Apostles gave the strongest demonstration of *their* divine commission by the wonderful miracles they performed, and the prophecies, since fulfilled, which they delivered. The Prophets of the Old Testament, in a similar way, proved themselves to be messengers from God. Swedenborg carried with him none of these credentials. He wrought no miracles, but like Mohammed, gave a pitiful excuse for the want of them.

2. The Scriptures, which Swedenborg admits to be a revelation from God, give us *no warrant* for expecting any *new* revelation. On the contrary, they teach us to "hold fast the form of sound words," and they say, "though we, or an Angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." These passages give us no reason to expect any new revelation or any other gospel than that which the Apostles preached.

3. The view which Swedenborg gives of the Scriptures is absolutely contrary to the account of their design and efficacy, which is presented in the Gospel itself. *Paul*, in his epistle to *Timothy*, says: "From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith, which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for *doctrine*, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." *Swedenborg* says: "In the word there is a spiritual sense, *heretofore* unknown; owing to this sense the word is divinely inspired; its holiness doth not appear in its literal sense. No one, *heretofore*, hath had the least idea that there is in the word any spiritual sense."

The Word of God, Swedenborg here says, has a spiritual sense which was not known till *his* time, and of which no one had the least idea. Consequently, *Timothy*, *Paul*, and *all the Apostles* were entirely ignorant of it. They lived seventeen hundred years before him, and as the spiritual sense of the Word was not known till *his* appearance, *they* knew nothing of it. Must we not with mingled surprise and indignation hear this man, in effect, assert that Apostles, martyrs, and dis-

ciples of the Son of God, for so many hundred years, had not the least knowledge of the most important sense of the divine word. Is it not a proof of the absurdity of *his* internal sense, that the Apostles knew nothing of it?

4. Swedenborg denies the inspiration of a great part of the *Divine Word*. "The books of the word," says he, "are all those which have an internal sense; but those which have *not* that internal sense, are not the word. The books of the word in the Old Testament are the five books of Moses, the book of Joshua, the book of Judges, the two books of Samuel, the two books of Kings, the Psalms of David, the Prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, the Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonas, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi; and in the New Testament, the four Gospels and the Apocalypse. The rest have *not* the internal sense. The writings of St. Paul and the other Apostles, are dogmatic writings, and not written in the style of the word."

Thus this professed Seer, without offering one authentic proof that he was sent by God, would have us believe *his* word, and on no better authority than this, deny the inspiration of the writings of men, who gave the most incontestable evidence that they were messengers from heaven.

If on *his* authority we should reject thirty-two sacred books, why should we not, on the authority of Thomas Paine, deny the other thirty-four to be the Word of God, and cast the whole away together. There is as much reason why we should do the latter as the former.

5. This professed Seer not merely makes such unwarranted assertions respecting the Sacred Scriptures, as has been already shown, but in his *explanation* of that part which he professed to receive as divine, he reduces the inspired volume to a mass of absurdity. According to him, "The tree of life signifies love. The tree of knowledge, faith. The length of Noah's ark signifies holiness, its breadth truth, its height good. The flood, temptation. Husband and wife, evils and falses. Every fowl after its kind, all spiritual truths. Jehovah signifies, divine good. God, divine truth. Money signifies knowledge of truth in great abundance. Virgins, affections and truth. Women, conjunctions of goodness and truth." It is perhaps needless to say that such interpretations of Scripture are not more absurd than irreverent to its great Author. In this way that Holy Book might be made to signify anything, and at length, nothing.

6. That Swedenborg was not, as he pretended, a divine messenger, is most evident from his

glaring and shameless contradictions of the noblest truths contained in the Divine Word. His charges against Trinitarians of worshipping three Gods are grossly unjust. We worship the same God in three distinct persons, *not* three distinct Gods in three distinct persons. We believe in a distinction of personal subsistence as well as of operation, but *not* of essence, in the Godhead, because the *Bible* has told us that there are in it the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and has ascribed to them operations, such as begetting, being begot, and proceeding from, which imply distinction of personality. All that is valuable in the doctrine of *unity* is secured when you admit unity of essence, of affection, of will, and of plan. The Swedenborgian asks if there are three distinct persons in the Godhead, why not four? why not many more? We answer, *because* the *Bible assures* us that there are only three. He asks us again, how can the person be distinct, when there is unity and identity of essence? We reply, the *Bible* has assured us that it *can*, and we take its word for the fact, although we cannot explain the mystery. Swedenborg vainly attempts to reconcile his assertion, *that there is only one person in the Godhead*, with Christ's prayer to his Father and his cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Occasionally, indeed,

one may in enthusiasm say, "Awake my soul, be thou stirred up from within me;" but if a man were habitually, and for a series of years, found addressing *himself* as his own *Father*, he would pass for and be a *madman*. And yet this is what Swedenborg teaches us was done by Christ. He reduces, too, the glorious *Paraclete* or *comforter* to a mere figure of speech. "I will send the Comforter," said Christ. This simply meant, according to Swedenborg, "I will send *myself*." A minister has to take a journey, and he says to a sick family which he has been visiting, "I must be away for a season, but I will send a friend and brother pastor to visit you in your affliction," meaning all the while *himself*, and there being no such friend and brother pastor "*in rerum natura*," in the nature of things. This would certainly be strange language, and well fitted to deceive and mislead. With Swedenborg's view of the Godhead, the *atonement*, as understood and received by all Christians, of course falls to the ground. Since there is only one person in the Godhead, if Christ died a sacrifice on Mount Calvary, He was offered up a *sacrifice to himself*. The president and the victim of the sacrifice was the same identical person. Christ was the "My God!" to whom He raised that thrilling shriek of anguish, an assertion absurd as though you

would maintain that *Isaac* was *Abraham* on Mount Moriah, as the latter took the knife to slay his son. Of course this *identification* of the two parties in the great sacrificial transaction of Calvary, reduces it to a mere mockery.

Besides heaven and hell, Swedenborg maintains that there is another world, which he calls the spiritual world, in which persons abide for a length of time, and some of them for centuries after death. The Divine Word gives us no intimation of such a world. In this *supposed* spiritual world, resembling in many respects the Mohammedan heaven, we see men, the same as they were here, eating, drinking, marrying; children being educated; some men talking about politics or the fair sex, till they cannot hear one another speak through the noise they make; others feasting till they are sick; others tasting fruits or smelling flowers till they are wearied; Christians still Christians; Mohammedans still Mohammedans; Papists, Idolaters and Jews still the same; Luther turning Swedenborgian two hundred years after his death; Dutchmen losing their trade if they dont join the New Church; Englishmen disputing on politics; Popish monks slyly going out to convert the protestants, and getting roughly handled for their imprudence; Popish Bishops meeting to keep their people still

in spiritual slavery; fathers ready to murder their own infants; some people attending theatres; Christians and Mohammedans cordially hating each other about the Trinity; Jews trafficking in pears; and the Lord in seventeen hundred and seventy, sending out his Apostles to preach the Gospel to the inhabitants of Swedenborg's spiritual world. If we could only bring ourselves to believe all the other statements, this *last* one would seem the most probable part of the whole, for most assuredly the inhabitants of that world seem very much to be in need of a *fresh supply of Apostolical labors*.

We have thus given a brief summary of the teachings of the "New Jerusalem" prophet. They are not only, as will be seen at a glance by every intelligent reader, opposed to sound reason and Revelation, but, as we are forced to believe, are indications of a disordered mind. He might swear to them, as he professed a willingness to do, but still we could not believe them. It would be perfect madness to *substitute* them for the doctrines contained in the glorious gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

## XXXV.

## SACRAMENTARIANISM.\*

The advocates of this system of error, which began to develop itself vigorously in Oxford, England, about the year 1833, are sometimes denominated Puseyists and Tractarians, but the more recent and expressive name is that of *Sacramentarians*. The system they reinaugurated in England, is nothing less than the philosophy of the School-men, which bewildered and subdued the intellect; and the Sacramental and priestly system of the Mediæval ages, which almost extinguished subjective and personal religion and reduced Christianity to a round of vicarious performances, equally deadening to the people and the performers. Indeed it may be safely affirmed that what we call Sacramentarianism in the nineteenth century was the predominating religion of the fourth century. And this fact explains the reason of Sacramentarian sympathy with the

\* For many valuable thoughts in this chapter the author cheerfully acknowledges his indebtedness to the gifted pen of Dr. Stone, of Philadelphia.

fourth century. *Almost* every element of Popery was then in full action. Having lost the light of the Sun of Righteousness, the ministers of that day were walking amid sparks of their own kindling.

The ecclesiastics who adhere to and maintain this system, hold that when the Reformation was introduced into England, it brought in another Gospel, that is, a gospel different from that which for some previous ages had been known in that country. Accordingly they set themselves at work to expel the intruder and to reintroduce the elder, and, what they hold to be the true gospel. Their labors have been attended by at least one result. They have *not* succeeded in expelling the gospel of the Reformation, but they *have* succeeded in virtually reintroducing that against which the Reformers protested. The system introduced by the Reformers has for its leading, governing principle, the great idea of *salvation by grace*; while the system reintroduced from the predecessors of the Reformers has for *its* leading, governing principle, the opposite idea of *salvation by works*. The difference between the two systems may be traced through a great variety of particulars, both of doctrine and of practice, both of internal structure and of external development; yet upon careful examination, all

these particulars will be found ranging themselves on either side, under the two general and distinguishing ideas of *salvation* by *grace* and *salvation* by *works*.

The *terms*, grace and works, are indeed known and recognized under both systems. The vast difference between them lies in this, that under the one system *grace* is the leading, governing idea in the way of salvation; while under the other that idea is *works*. Hence under the one system we hear most of the riches of *grace*, of being justified by *grace*, sanctified by *grace*, glorified by *grace*; while under the other, we hear most of the value of *works*, of justification by *works*; the merit of *works*; the reward of *works*. Under the one system, the great idea is, *grace producing works*; under the other, the great idea is, *works procuring grace*.

In our day, perhaps, these leading ideas appear most frequently under another form. Thus, the one system is all vocal of *Christ*; *faith in Christ*, *love for Christ*, *following Christ*, being in the Church *because in Christ*. While the other is all instinct with the *Church*; *reverencing the Church*, *loving the Church*, *obeying the Church*, being in Christ *because in the Church*. The one system looks *directly* to *Christ* for the grace of pardon, and for the sufficiency of strength in all the works

of godliness. The other calls the Church our holy mother, the depository of all grace, the dispenser of our sufficiency for "every good word and work."

Let us look more directly and thoroughly into the structure of the two systems, and ascertain some of the prominent points of difference.

The earliest outward and public act in the religious life is ordinarily performed in *baptism*. How does the evangelical system regard this rite? It holds that by baptism we are made members of *Christ*, in the sense of being thereby made members of the visible *Church*. Nor does it hold this sense as a mere outward, empty thing. It considers baptism as a sign, sacramentally, of regeneration; as a seal, conditionally, of the promises of pardon and life; and as "a means"—one among others, of inward regeneration and newness of mind. The Evangelical system also holds that the child thus sacramentally in Christ needs, still further, to be brought *believingly* to Christ. According to this system, *sacramentally* in the Church, and *believingly* in Christ, are not identical. Indeed, whatever be the design and value of infant baptism, *this* system *practically* regards the inward significance of that rite—*effectual* regeneration by the Spirit and living union with Christ, as in all cases a work *subsequent* to

the outward washing; an effect to be sought for in all cases alike by the use of further and appointed means. We say the system *practically* takes this ground, *because*, even if we allow that the true regeneration is possible in infancy, it is impossible to show that the outward washing and the inward work are ever *identical* in point of *time*; and *because*, even if we admit that the outward and the inward may, in some cases, be thus, in point of time, identical, it is still impossible to show *which those cases are*; and *because*, therefore, it is possible that, in *each* case, the outward washing may stand *alone*. On this *possibility* the Evangelical system acts in *all* cases. After the outward washing, it always goes on to seek the inward regeneration, in the use of all appropriate means.

What then are the means or what is the peculiar way in which the Evangelical system seeks to bring the sinner really and actually to the Saviour? We reply in general terms that the system relies mainly on the instrumentality of divine truth, under the agency of the Divine Spirit. And what it looks for, is the bringing of men intelligently and believably to the Lord Jesus Christ, as the sole and immediate giver of pardon, justification, and eternal life. It will be evident to every candid mind that this way

neither dispenses with baptism nor undervalues it. It considers baptism, like all other means of grace, as part of a grand body of religious teaching; the whole of which, when it is rightly received and used, is designed and fitted to bring us, at the earliest possible period of life, to a spiritual *knowledge* of Christ, to a living *faith* in Christ, and to an obedient *following* of Christ.

Now, in opposition to the Evangelical system, what is the way in which the Sacramental system professes to bring the sinner to the Saviour? It considers this vital movement as made *in* and *by* baptism. *In* and *by* baptism it claims to *convey* the Holy Spirit; to make the baptized *incorporate* in Christ; and thus officially and potentially to implant the *seed* of a new and divine life, with full pardon of sin and justification before God. Thenceforward, if the baptized fall not into deadly sin, if he lose not his baptismal grace, he is considered as *safe*. From that moment he is regarded as, in the full sense, a Christian, and all that he is supposed to need, is to stand fast in his baptismal integrity, and in his obedience to the Church.

According to this way, the act of coming to Christ is not the act of the baptized; it is an act done *for* him and *in* him by the Church; by the Church claiming to dispense to him that Spirit

of which *it* has been made the depository; to incorporate him into that *Christ* who has become mysteriously incarnate in *it*; and to beget in him that life which has been plenarily invested in *it*. The *contrast* between these two systems thus becomes very palpable.

Let us now proceed to consider the ways in which these two systems seek to secure the performance of good works. In aiming to accomplish this result, the Evangelical system makes the Bible its sole, ultimately authoritative *rule of faith*. It considers the Bible as that special body of divine truth which, being certainly inspired by the infallible Spirit, is not mere paper and ink, but the *true mind of God*. Hence it considers the Bible as, if not in itself, necessarily quickening, yet an unquestionable instrument for the manifestation of the *quicken<sup>g</sup> power of God*. Giving the Bible this place, the system considers other things but as useful helps to a right *understanding* and to a beneficial *use* of the Bible. The *authority* to bind the reason, to regulate the faith, and to govern the life, and the *power* to quicken the soul, to rectify the will, and to sanctify the heart, reside not in these *helps*, but in that *Divine Word and Spirit* which these helps assist us in bringing before the mind.

Having brought the sinner to the Saviour for

pardon and adoption by the Divine Word and Spirit, the Evangelical system does not seek out some new and strange *means* of operation, some new and strange *way* of proceeding. It uses its *old* means still and walks still in its *old* way. It knows that the Word and Spirit of Christ cannot only bring the soul *to* Christ, but also keep the soul *in* Christ. It knows that as "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God," the Word of God can enlighten, can correct, can cleanse, can comfort, can strengthen; that it can recover the backslider, and reclaim the wanderer, and hasten the loiterer, and speak cheer to the diligent toiler, and furnish arms to the valiant warrior, and spread glory through the soul of the dying saint. In short, the Evangelical system teaches that *all* the means of grace which God has appointed or approved, and which he has garnered in the *Church* and under the husbandry of the *Spirit*—such means as the Sabbath, the living ministry, and the teaching Sacraments; prayer, self-examination, and mutual warning and exhortation—are but so many *modes*, accommodated to our weaknesses and our wants, of *preaching* the *lively Word of God*, under the power of the living Spirit of God, to the hearts and consciences and souls of sinful men; and that when *this* word is thus brought by the Spirit into its appointed use

and application, it will be abundantly blessed, not only to the first result, of bringing men to Christ for pardon, justification, and the *beginning* of life, but also to the *further* result of building them up *in Christ*, unto sanctification, holy activity, and the *perfecting* of spiritual life.

According to this system, it will be seen, good works take their character from that life, which, by God's blessing, it seeks to generate. The Evangelical idea of good works is, not that they consist in a set round of formal and ceremonial observances, in outward fastings and penances, and alms-deeds—for all these may be done, and yet the heart may be filled with worldly tempers and the life absorbed in worldly pleasures—but that they consist in the cultivation of inwardly holy affections, and in the putting forth of outwardly holy influences; in a word, that they consist in a holy life, perfected in the soul, and propagated through the world.

But, important as it is to attend to the peculiar quality of those good works which the Evangelical system seeks to secure, it is, if possible, still more important to ascertain the *use* of the good works which this system proposes to make. This is a *vital* point. Does this system, then, teach that these good works are in *any* sense the ground of our pardon and justification before God? Or,

does it consider them as a basis or foundation on which *any* man may build *any part* of his hope of heaven? Their *place* is that of the *fruits* of faith, *evidences* of regeneration, *effects* of salvation. Their place is that of love's labor for God, with thanksgiving for the grace that saves.

But now let us glance at the *Sacramentarian* system in this point of view. How does it seek to secure the performance of good works?

This system, it should be remembered, does *not* make the *Bible* its sole, authoritative *Rule of Faith*. To construct this rule, it brings in as a necessary, and, virtually, infallible interpreter of the *Bible*, its great idea of *Tradition*, or the alleged teachings of the *Spirit*, handed down first in the *oral* and finally in the *documentary* teachings and decisions of the *Church*. This system considers this *Tradition*, *not* as one of the human helps which are to be discriminately used with a view to a right understanding of the *Bible*, as the only authoritative *Rule of Faith*, but a *part* of the authoritative *Rule itself*; and so necessary as to become, practically, the most *important* part. By this tradition it imposes on the *Scriptures*, at *one* time, a sense which they do not really contain; and at *another* it adds to the *Scriptures* dogmas, of which the *Bible knows nothing*. In this way, the system either governs the minds of

its disciples by a *perverted* sense of the Word of God, or leads them *beyond* and *aside* from its teachings. By the authority thus set up over the Bible, and by *this authority alone*, it is enabled, with quite a show of plausibility, to introduce and defend that peculiar ecclesiastical apparatus of Priesthood, Sacraments, and Sacramental rites, by which it proposes to bring the sinner to the Saviour, and and to secure the performance of good works.

But *this* system must be presented somewhat more in detail. From such detail it will become apparent that the system finds its whole life, meaning, and power, in the efficacy of the *Sacraments*, and of *Sacramental* rites.

The first thing to be noted in giving these details, is, what the system terms Apostolical Succession. In the Church of Rome, Ordination, or as it is called, Orders, is held to be a *high Sacrament*. Under the *Sacramentarian* system, it is regarded as a virtual sacrament. *Sacramentarian* writers do not give it the name of a Sacrament, but content themselves with considering it as merely a *Sacramental rite*. And yet they hold it to be *such* a rite as is indispensably necessary to the administration and efficacy of all the other Sacraments. But with these writers “Apostolical Succession” is merely another name for the power of *Orders*. It is that idea which

they fashion of the power, as lying at the very fountain of all validity and of all efficacy in Church polity and Church privilege.

What, then, according to the Sacramentarian Theology, does "*Apostolical Succession*" mean? The answer to this question may be given in the following manner: When, after His resurrection, Christ met His disciples in that closed room, "where they were assembled for fear of the Jews," and said unto them, "Peace be unto you; as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you;" and when, having thus spoken, "He breathed on them," and added, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained," He had, until that hour, been the *sole Priest* of His Church, and the *sole Dispenser* of the gifts of the Spirit. But, *then and there*, by that *word* and *outbreathing*, He delegated His priesthood to the *Apostles*, and *imparted* to their official keeping and dispensation the whole body of the Spirit's gifts. Having thus *finished* His *peculiar* work on earth, He ascended into Heaven, and entered into His *rest*, leaving the Apostles in His stead, to carry forward His cause, to transmit His Priesthood, and to dispense the gifts of the Spirit. This they were to do by their own ministry, especially by the mysterious act of

*ordaining their successors* in the Apostolate, and other *subordinate* ministers. By the laying on of hands they dispensed the gifts of the Spirit to *all*, both to those subordinate ministers and to the common people. But the *full power of dispensing* these gifts they conveyed to none but their official *successors* in the Apostolate.

According to this system, in the hands of the Bishops is locked up the whole of Christ's *great spiritual gift* to His ministry. From Christ, through Bishops, *only* runs the entire stream of life-giving influences for the salvation of a lost world; reaching other *ministers* and other *men*, only as it flows *first* through *them*, and by their officially dispensing act. Such, according to the *Sacramentarian* system, is the *Apostolical Succession*. This system makes it, if not a sacrament in name, yet more than a sacrament in *effect*. Nay, further, the system makes this Apostolical Succession the highest and sole fountain, under Christ, of all *other* Sacraments and Sacramental rites in the Church. Without this succession, there can, according to the theory before us, be neither Church, nor Sacraments, in all the world.

According to this theory, then, the *Priesthood* is a *sacrificial* power, and the *Priest himself*, a true *Sacrificer*; both together constituting a *necessary Priestly intervention*, for dispensing all

ordinary gifts and graces. *This* notion of the priesthood is the proper antecedent to the idea which the system fashions of the Sacraments themselves, and of all Sacramental rites. This idea is, that the *Sacraments* themselves are awful miracles, tremendous mysteries, life-giving and life-nourishing marvels. Thus *baptism* regenerates and imparts a new spiritual life, by making the baptized a participant in the incarnation of Christ, and it also washes out original sin, and gives full, perfect justification before God. *Next*, *Confirmation*, as a Sacramental *rite*, conveys the Holy Spirit to increase the measure of those mysterious gifts previously imparted by baptism. *And then* the *Eucharist*, as a higher Sacrament, sacrificially offers and actually communicates the very body and blood of Christ, to feed and nourish that new life already given and confirmed; and constantly carries toward completion the wonder of making the communicant, both in body and soul, a participant in the incarnation of Christ.

After baptism, if the subject of it happens to sin, he is placed once more at a more or less awful distance from Christ, and he is to be restored or reincorporated by new *priestly* interventions. At this point are introduced the remaining *Sacramental* and *disciplinary* rites of the system. It sends the baptized for *private*, and virtually, *auric-*

*ular confession*, to the priest; enjoins priestly *absolution* on such confession; and to satisfy for past baptismal sin, prescribes *virtual penances*, consisting in primitive fastings, meritorious alms-deeds, voluntary and painful mortifications or self-punishments, and, in general, implicit submission to all the disciplinary requirements of the priesthood. In this way the system allows the fallen, after baptism, *if* sufficiently diligent, submissive and self-chastening, to hope, not for restoration at once, but for a *gradual, progressive* rejustification, and for a possible, final and full reincorporation into Christ in a future state. But all now depends on the perfectness with which the penitent submits to discipline, and on the amount of his primitive fasts, alms, and voluntary self-inflictions, as tending to chasten and render him meet for the divine favor. If these things are *sufficient* in perfectness and amount, the system allows him to hope that, at the day of judgment, he may, through God's mercy, obtain a second perfect justification and full admission into the kingdom of Heaven. If *not* thus sufficient, the system has no word of encouragement for him, save that, peradventure, the prayers and other offices of *living* saints may be of service to the *dead*, and that at the final day he may possibly be saved "*so as by fire*." Thus, by acting on man's

deep consciousness of sin, and on his naturally superstitious dread of awful spiritual prerogative, supposed to be vested in a priesthood, the system sways its mighty sceptre over the minds, the bodies, and the fortunes of its subjects.

This system, as its structure has now been unfolded, we may never hear preached as a *whole* by those who advocate the Sacramental theory. But still parts of it are taught. These parts, however, indicate clearly the theory to which they belong, just as Naturalists can describe the structure of an animal from inspecting one or two of its bones. In two ways only can the system be thoroughly studied and comprehended; by a careful and patient examination of the *writings* of its *advocates*, and by a just and continued observation of its *working* on the great mass of those by whom it is received.

In looking at the Evangelical and Sacramental systems, as thus presented, it is very manifest that they are *theological opposites*, *utterly* and *forever* irreconcilable. If the one be the *true* gospel, the other is necessarily *false*. Which is the *false* can readily be seen by any one who reads his Bible carefully, and, by prayer, asks for divine illumination.

“The Creed of *Sacramentarianism*,” as a spicy writer justly remarks, “is mediæval superstition

diluted down to the standard of the age we live in. It *lisps* out the monstrous lies which Popery utters "*ore rotundo*" and "*ex cathedra*." It is a half measure, and exposed like all such, to varied and all-sided contempt. It is pitied by the Papist and despised by the *genuine* Protestant. It irritates the thorough-paced Papist by its divergencies from the exact standard of infallible orthodoxy. It offends the Evangelical Christian by its mummeries of ceremony and its exclusiveness of spirit. Its doctrine of Apostolic Succession—in other words, of the twenty thousandth transmission of a sacred scent or breath, through generations of saints and sinners, is a dream more childish than that of the vestal fire of ancient, or the true cross of modern, Rome. With all its big talk and brave apparel, its painted windows and smoking incense, it is but a *dastard*, halting between two opinions, ever looking over its shoulder toward Popery, but afraid to take its final run."

In closing our remarks upon this point we would just say, that Sacramentarians in England, as well as in this country, are not only making heavy demands on the credulity of the public, but also upon their knowledge of the dictionary. Paul would have had a hard time, had he lived in these latter days, to talk or write in true ecclesiastical language. An English High Church

paper has the following paragraph, in describing a religious service: "The celebrant was vested in a chasuble. The deacon wore a dalmetie, and the sub-deacon a tunicle. Each wore a maniple, which is like a short stole, over the left arm. A laced alb was also worn by both the celebrant and deacon. The celebration was musical, and the fine music added to its æsthetic effect." It is curious to notice the difference between these ecclesiastics and some better persons who lived before them. The Psalmist says: "Let thy Priests be clothed with righteousness." Isaiah says, "He hath clothed me with garments of salvation." Peter says, "Be clothed with *humility*, for God resisteth the proud." There were some, we acknowledge, the inhabitants of a *city* mentioned in Revelation, that was rather unfortunate, who were "clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls." These came the nearest in the style of their dress to the aspiring ecclesiastics of England.

Archbishop Whately calls the Sacramentarians "those factors for Rome who remind one of Charon, in the old mythology, that grim ferryman whom Poets write of, continually ferrying over multitudes across the melancholy flood to a gloomy shore, from which he regularly returned himself alone, to take in a *fresh cargo*."

## XXXVI.

## ROMANISM.

OF all the forms of corruption that have ever come under the name of Christianity, *Romanism*, we have no hesitancy in saying, occupies the bad preëminence. Most of the other distorted shapes have been but mole-hills; *this* is the great and hideous mountain. By its perversions of great, Christian doctrines, and by the meretricious ornaments with which it has loaded simple Christian rites, it has justly earned the title of a *baptized Paganism*. No enlightened and impartial mind, looking at Christianity as it is taught in the New Testament and exemplified by the Apostles and early Churches, and comparing it with the Papal system as enunciated in the decrees of Councils, embodied in its existing institutions and manifested in the moral condition of those lands where it predominates, can help concluding that it is but a miserable caricature of Christianity, bearing to such a general, staring, impudent resemblance, connected with a total dissimilarity of spirit and expression, as we

sometimes notice in two countenances, one of which is lighted up from *above*, while the other gets all its inspirations from *below*. Both Christianity and Popery profess to be supernatural, to be emanations from God, to have a unity, to have a head, to have founded a Church, to contain mysteries, to reveal a future world, and to aspire to universal dominion. But, when we approach the two closely, and let in light, air, and life, we soon perceive a vast difference between them, the difference between a living body and a corpse which had once been alive; nay, rather, like that which exists between a living body and an ill-designed and ill-executed model or wax figure of it, got up for the market. The gospel, although a light from on high, is a broad and Catholic light, "a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of my people Israel;" but Popery has tried to narrow, to darken, and to refract out of its course the blessed beams of Christianity. It has changed a liberal creed into a stiff sectarianism. It has "limited the Holy One of Israel." It has turned tidings of salvation into tidings of damnation. Christianity suspends, indeed, an awful shade of mystery over the fate of the lost, but it does not assert definitely the perdition of a single individual. Popery anathematizes, excommunicates, damns

by wholesale, and never seems so much in its elements as when it doth

“Assume the balance and the rod;  
Rejudge God’s judgment, be the God of God.”

Out of its pale there is no salvation; and that pale is not the fold of the Lamb, but that of the Romish Church and the Pope. In vain has it tried, by its lie of purgatory and its lie of indulgences, to alleviate the fearfulness of its anathemas, and to shade away the fierceness of its flames. It is, in reality, equally hopeless and terrible as Naturalism; as cold and as cruel as the grave; a lesson of despair as well as a system of organized deceit. Its doctrine of purgatory is a mere lightning-rod, seeking to draw off a little of that load of wrath and thunder which it has gathered gloomily and bent over all the human family, except the favored ones who hold its tenets. In respect of unity, too, it has mimicked and misrepresented Christianity. For the true celestial centre—*Christ*—it has substituted the false, earthly centre—the *Pope*. Its system revolves in a movement as absurd as though the planets and sun were turning around the earth. The unity produced by this false centre is pretentious and plausible, but unnatural and forced. It is the unity, not of living but

dead substances. It is the compactness of a crushing despotism. It is the uniformity of a landscape covered with snow. The unity of Popery is that of outward form and hypocrisy; that of Christianity is the unity of inward spirit and of heart. Popery professes to have founded a Church—nay *the* Church—but how different the Church founded by Popery and that founded by Christ! The one is a mass of corruption, rotting in its mummied lies, although placed in a gilded coffin, with a dim religious light in the vault, discovering the gorgeous pictures with which it is adorned, and with a rich and mournful music forever wailing above. The *true Church of Christ*, on the other hand, although humble like its *Master*, is *alive*. It is composed of materials which, amidst many diversities, agree in this, they are all “living stones,” hewn and polished by God. A Roman Catholic Priest, some time since, in Germany, on entering the pulpit, took a walnut with him into it. He told his hearers that the shell was tasteless and valueless—that was Calvin’s Church. The skin was nauseous, disagreeable and worthless—that was the Lutheran Church. He then remarked that he would now show them the Holy, Roman, Apostolic Church. He cracked the walnut and found it *rotten*.

So far as relates to the outward—the visible,

the complicated and magnificent machinery—we are willing to acknowledge that the Romish Church contains much to win the admiration of the multitude. A profound thinker and eloquent writer justly remarks, in relation to this point: “If it be for a moment forgotten, that in every bell, and cowl, and vestment of the Romish Church, there is hid a device against the liberty and welfare of mankind, and that its gold, and pearls, and fine linen, are the deckings of eternal ruin; and if this apparatus of worship be compared with the impurities and the cruelties of the polytheistic rites, great praise may seem due to its contrivers. Nothing in Christianity that might subserve the purposes of dramatic effect has been overlooked; even the most difficult parts of the materials have been wrought into keeping. The humiliations and poverty which shroud the glory of the principal personage, and the horrors of his death—the awful beauty and compassionate advocacy of the Virgin mother, the Queen of heaven; the stern dignity of the twelve; the marvels of miraculous power; the heroism of the martyrs; the mortification of the Saints; the punishment of the enemies of the Church; the practices of devils; the intercession and tutelary cares of the blessed; the sorrows of the nether world, and the glories of the upper;

all these materials of poetic and scenic effect have been elaborated by the genius and taste of the Italian artists, until a spectacle has been got up which leaves the most splendid shows of the ancient idol-worship of Greece and Rome at a vast distance of inferiority.

“But of what avail is all this sumptuous apparatus in promoting either genuine piety or purity of manners? History and existing facts leave no obscurity on the question; for the atrocity of crime, and the foulness of licentiousness, have ever kept pace with the perfectionment of the Romish service. Those nations upon whose manners it has worked its proper influence with the fullest effect, have been the most corrupt and the most debauched. Splendid rites and odious vices have dwelt in peace under the same consecrated roofs, and the actors and spectators of these sacred pantomimes have been wont to rush together from the solemn pomps of worship to the chambers of filthy sin.”

We will now examine the subject of Romanism more fully and minutely, and let the reader see that we have ample grounds for the many strong expressions we have employed. Of course we freely grant, as justice and truth require, that some truth is mingled with the Romish doctrines; that genuine piety survives in some of its mem-

bers, and that some bright examples are to be found in her history, of self-sacrifice and genuine devotion of heart. But the great fact, we still maintain with the utmost boldness, remains equally true, that the *Papal system* is one of "*abomination*." It is unbelieving, idolatrous, self-righteous, cruel and persecuting. It practically denies the Father and the Son, making void the work of the Holy Spirit, and it tends, of its own nature, to *ensnare and ruin the souls of men*.

We affirm, that the Papal system is "*abominable*," because it is *unbelieving*. It boasts, indeed, of Apostolic faith; but true faith is really blotted out by a blind credulity. It does not believe the sufficiency and fullness of the Word of God, and therefore strives to piece it out with human tradition. It does not believe divine truth to bear its own evidence, by its witness in the conscience, sealed by the Spirit of God; and hence it would prop it up by an enormous falsehood, the infallibility of a sinful, erring man. It does not believe the threatening of God against image-worshippers, and hence it enjoins the practice, and covers it with the same vain excuses which the heathen employed. It does not believe the sufficiency of Christ's offering, once for all, but completes it by masses without number for the quick and dead. It does not believe that Jesus

is full of grace, and, therefore, it provides us with a more kind and gentle mediator in the blessed Virgin. It does not believe one Holy, Catholic Church, the life of which consists in union with Christ by faith, but substitutes for it a local, political, sectarian corporation, which has no other bond than a blind submission to the Bishop of Rome. It does not believe the many warnings of Prophets and Apostles, aimed against the idolatrous apostasy of the latter times, but allows them to be fulfilled against itself, and thus it perils fearfully the salvation of its subjects. To the eye of faith, Popery, and not Protestantism, is the "grand negative." It believes a thousand legendary falsehoods, but it does not believe the true sayings of the *living God*.

We affirm, that the *Papal system* is "*abominable*," because it is *idolatrous*. With one consenting voice, all Jews, all Mohammedans, and all Protestants, bear this witness against it. This grievous stumbling-block, for ages has kept back the Jews from the faith of Christ. They see in Papal Christianity an open and manifest worship of idols. This very sin let loose the Mohammedan scourge on the Eastern Churches, where it prevailed still earlier, and gave strength to that great delusion. The direct and evident aim of that judgment was Christian idolatry. It was the

deeper sin of Western Christendom that, after the double plague, they repented not of the work of their hands, to worship demons, and idols of gold and silver. The Protestants, who have received the open book of life from the hands of Christ, have ever renewed the same charge against the Papal Church. They declare with the English Church, that it commits "idolatry, to be abhorred of all faithful Christians." Their own writers, indeed, allow that unless transubstantiation be true, the worship of the wafer is idolatry. They tell us also that the change depends on the intention of the priest. Unhappy Creed! which condemns its followers, in every act of worship, to be *doubtful* whether they are not committing a deadly sin against the God of Heaven, and whether the most solemn act of their religion be not the worship of an idol. Prophets and Apostles confirm the truth of the charge. They declare that the sins of the golden calf, and of Baal-peor, will find their counterpart in Christian idolatries; and that the Church, seated on the seven hills of Rome, would be "the mother of harlots," or idolatrous Churches, and the source of abominations throughout the earth.

We affirm, that the Papal system is "*abominable*," because it is *self-righteous*. It robs Christ of His grace, that it may clothe the sinner in the

robes of merit. It declares that saints have done, and may do, more than God's law requires; a manifest impiety that subverts the Gospel from its foundation. It pronounces a curse on those who deny that sinners, by their good works, merit increase of grace and eternal life. Its whole system fills the eye of the soul with masses, penances, indulgences, merits, and priestly rites; and hides the one glorious object of real hope and confidence, the Son of God and His death on the Cross, for the sins of a perishing world.

We affirm, that the Papal system is "abominable," because it is *cruel and persecuting*. Its maxims are steeped in blood. Its disciples, like unconverted Saul, in their blinded fanaticism, "breathe out threatenings and slaughter" against the followers of the Lamb. Its first voice, when the Reformation arose, was to condemn and curse the maxim, "It is against the will of the Spirit that heretics should be burned." What modern heart," says ISAAC TAYLOR, who thoroughly comprehended every subject on which he undertook to write, "would not leap with fear, if it were permitted to us for an hour to step back from the nineteenth century to the age of Vespasian, and to push our way into the theatre of imperial and popular diversions, just when the gladiator was about to die for the sport of a philosophic

prince and of sumptuous citizens; or when hungry beasts were to be glutted with the warm flesh of the nobility of a conquered kingdom! And yet the Ancient Roman Theatre, with its mere sprinkling of blood and its momentary pangs and shrieks, quite fades out of view, if brought into comparison with that Colisæum of Papal cruelty, in which not a hundred or two of victims, but myriads of people—yes, nations entire—have been gorged! If we must shrink back, as assuredly we should, from the one spectacle, we shudder even to think of the other. Though it were possible to summon courage enough to gaze upon the mortal, yet equal, conflict of man with man, in the theatre, how shall we contemplate torments and burnings inflicted by the strong upon the weak; or if we might endure to see the lion and the panther spring upon their prey, could we force ourselves to the far more horrid sight, when the priest and the friar athirst, were to rush upon men, women, and babes!"

A late profound writer on "*Rationalism*" makes the startling statement, that "every intelligent reader of history must admit that more innocent persons have been murdered by the Romish Church than by any other human institution."

Finally, we affirm that the Papal system is "*abominable*," because in its whole practice it

denies the *Father* and the *Son*. For what is to deny the Father? Is it not to obscure from the world His fatherly love, to darken the light of His goodness, and blot out from their view the riches of His grace? Read the fierce and haughty decretals; hear the voice of the Pope proclaiming that it is necessary to all men, for salvation, to obey his will, and commanding them to deliver heretics, who rebel against him, to the secular sword. Then watch the racks, and dungeons, and frightful tortures of the Inquisition; hear the shrieks of the Albigenses, of the French Protestants murdered in cold blood; trace the whole course of Papal cruelty, from Dominic to the last victim of the holy office; and *then* answer the question, as in the sight of God, "Does not the religion which justifies, which commands, which praises and extols these hideous cruelties, deny the Father?" What worse denial can there be of the Father of Mercies, and the God of all consolation, than practically to affirm, that He is the Father of cruelties, the God who patronizes infamous and murderous wickedness?

What is it to deny the *Son*? Is it not to deny the fullness of His grace, the sufficiency of His perfect offering, His glory as the sole mediator, His love as the tenderest, and dearest, and nearest of friends? All this the Papal system

practically denies. The Son of God is counted less gracious than the Virgin; His sacrifice less availing to the believer than idolatrous masses to idol worshippers; his mediation unavailing without the further help of Saints and Angels; His name of Love made the warrant for murder and crime! Surely a system which thus denies the Father and the Son, must be, in God's sight, "*abominable*" and *hateful*. "We are frequently told," says Rev. Henry Melville, "and this is one of the most specious of the deceits through which Popery carries on its work, that the Roman Catholic religion is not what it was; that it took its complexion from the times; and that tenets, against which Protestants loudly exclaim, and principles which they indignantly execrate, were held only in the days of ignorance and barbarism, and have long since fled before the advance of civilization. And very ungenerous and unfair, we are told, it is to rake up the absurdities and cruelties of a rude and uninformed age, and to charge them on the creed of men in our own generation, who detest them as cordially as ourselves. Be it so; we are, at all events, dealing with an *infallible* Church; and unless the claim to infallibility be amongst the things given up, we are at a loss to know how this Church can so greatly have changed; how, since she never goes

wrong, she can renounce what she believed, and condemn what she did. And the Roman Church is not suicidal enough to give up her claim to infallibility; but she is sagacious enough to perceive that men are willing to be deceived, that an excess of *false charity* is blinding them to facts, and that there is abroad amongst them such an idolatry of what they call liberal, that they make it a point of honor to believe good of all evil, and, perhaps, evil of all good. Of this temper *of the times* is the Roman Church, marvelously wise in her generation, adroitly availing herself. *But there is no change in Popery.* The system is the same, intrinsically, inherently the same. It may assume different aspects to carry different purposes, but this is itself a *part* of Popery. It carries in its very constitution the variable appearance of the chameleon and the invariable venom of the serpent."

Romanism has seldom of late years been regarded steadily under its genuine and exclusive aspect, of an unappeasable foe to civil liberty. It may be, and no doubt is, in many senses, a cheat, but in every sense a *tyrant*. In vague and abstract terms we allow that Romanism confines her jurisdiction to things spiritual; but in practice, by vigilant and subtle induction, by claims of relationship between things spiritual

and things temporal, she brings all the affairs of this world within her constructive empire. To all the weapons of brute force she knows well how to unite those of artifice and restless intrigue, and even to associate with these, in many cases, the influence of profound piety. By turns with clasped hands, with eyes raised to heaven, and clad in sackcloth, she is the ardent and high-minded missionary; and next she is the courtier, climbing, flattering, and domineering; attacking by the arts of policy no less than by the aids of religion; bearing down the devout by appeals to his conscience, and holding out lures to the ambition of the diplomatist; caressing now the anarchist and now the despot; the foe of Republics and yet the assassin of Kings; changing her hues like the chameleon, as you observe her at Dublin, at London, at Madrid, or at Paris; winning over the sterner spirits by her Trappists, and the libertines by her Madonnas; drawing you heavenward by her incense, her concerts, and her sacred processions, and allowing you to slide into Hell by her cheapened absolutions. Indeed, wherever Romanism, through her ministers, finds admission, *there is no security, no confidence, no free agency, no free speech, no bold nor independent thought.* All is *conscious, irretrievable and unvarying bondage.*

In regard to the Rome of the *present* day, a modern traveler has said: "Were the absurdities and inanities of the Roman Ritual confined to Rome, one would pity and forget. But living in Rome and seeing it as the great heart from which, through the powerful arteries of superstition and faith, the great paralyzing dogmas of Papacy go forth to stagnate the blood of Christendom, hanging like a black pall over intellectual progress, a gloom shrouds the spirit and weighs upon the understanding. Everywhere the spectre of this great lie lifts its head. No feast is without the skeleton. Hence one weighty reason of the moral depression that afflicts so many visitors at Rome. They feel the effects without tracing the cause. Physical nature sympathizes, as we see in the Campagne, with the lack of the vitality of *truth*, without which neither individuals or nations can escape the curse of wasted talents."

This whole Papal system, which has cursed the world for centuries, and *which may yet trouble the Nations of the Earth before it expires*, we are assured upon *divine authority*, the Lord will consume by the breath of his mouth and destroy by the brightness of his coming. The Eagle of divine wrath, stooping down from heaven, shall fix his burning eye upon the usurper of Chris-

tendom *first*, and crying, “Paul I know, Peter I know, but who art thou?” shall tear Popery to pieces. “I beheld,” says Daniel, “till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed and given to the burning flame.” The beast, it thus appears, the proud, boasting beast of Papal power, is to be destroyed, not gradually, but quickly, fiercely, violently to be slain, and then cast, like a putrid thing, into the devouring fire, which, as if in a moment, closes over and consumes it. Such shall be its doom—a doom suitable to its character, and *richly merited by its crimes*.

THE END.





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